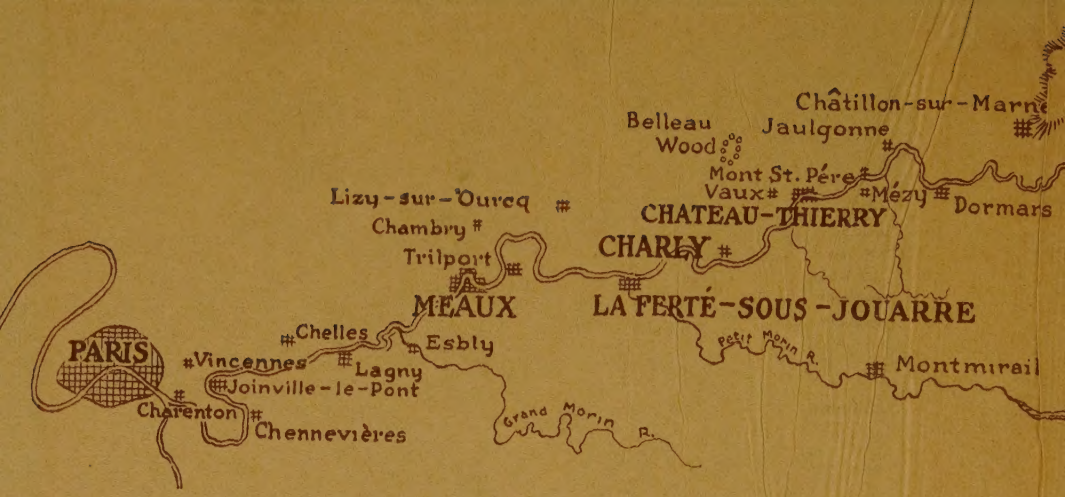
The Marne

Historic and Picturesque

By

Joseph Mills Hanson

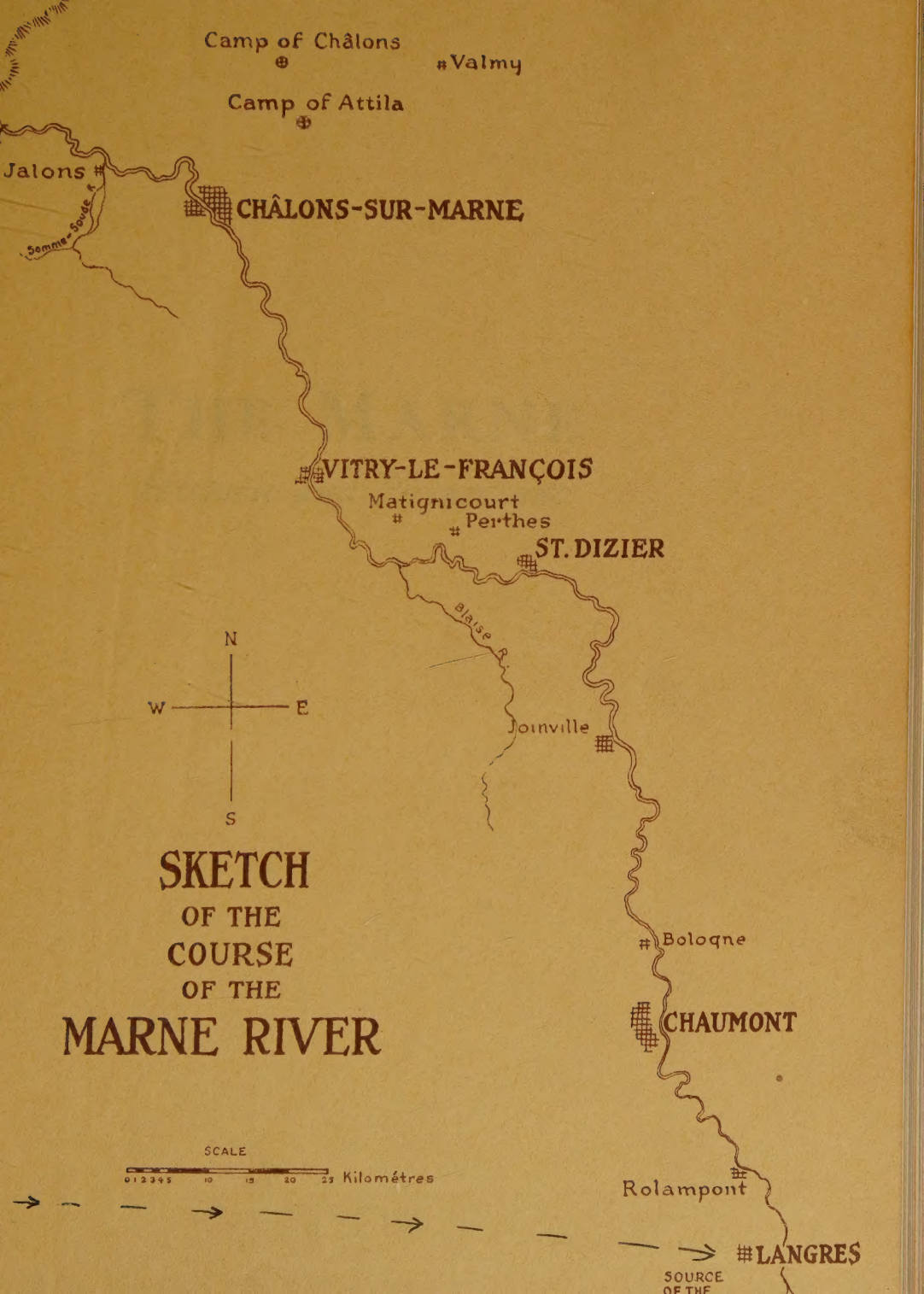


Birthday Greetings

1918- - - -1928

Frank & Marie

MEMOIRS A la GUERRE


Camp of Châlons
Valmy
Camp of Attila
Jalons
CHÂLONS-SUR-MARNE
Somme-Soude R.
VITRY-LE-FRANÇOIS
Matignicourt
Perthes
ST. DIZIER
Blaise R.
N
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E
S
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SKETCH
OF THE
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OF THE
MARNE RIVER
Bologne
CHAUMONT
SCALE
0 1 2 3 4 5 10 15 20 25 Kilomètres
Rolampont
LANGRES
SOURCE
OF THE

THE MARNE

Historic and Picturesque

The Spirit of the Marne

[*Page 321*]

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THE MARNE

Historic and Picturesque

By

JOSEPH MILLS HANSON

Author of *The Conquest of the Missouri*

Illustrations by J. Andre Smith

CHICAGO

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1922

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THE MARNE

Historic and Picturesque

THE MARNE
HISTORIC AND PICTURESQUE

CHAPTER I

A RIVER OF HISTORY

ALTHOUGH it can scarcely be maintained, as a few enthusiasts would have us believe, that rivers have been the most important factors in the making of human history, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that they have affected its course more profoundly than any other natural features of the earth save the oceans themselves. One need regard for but a moment the influence upon human events of such streams as the Nile, the Euphrates, the Indus, the Rhine, the Danube, the St. Lawrence, or the Mississippi to acknowledge the measure of their power in shaping the course of wars and political relations and, consequently, the destinies of nations.

It is obvious that in a populous country a great river must modify the existence of the peoples living adjacent to its banks, if only by reason of its volume, which renders it a military obstacle in war, a vehicle of commerce in peace, and a natural boundary of political significance at all times. But it is not always the great watercourses which play leading rôles in the march of events. The Metaurus, in Umbria, is little more than a brook; the Nebel, at Blenheim, is a mere marshy rivulet. Yet by his failure to make good his retirement across the Metaurus, Hasdrubel suffered defeat in the battle which lost the supremacy of the world to Carthage and gave it to Rome, while, centuries later, by forcing his passage of the Nebel,

Marlborough put a period to the victorious career of the armies of the France of Louis the Magnificent.

In a similar sense, but in a far greater degree, it is a river, small by comparison with hundreds of other watercourses, which through centuries has been involved in such momentous and decisive events, affecting the whole course of Western civilization, that it has come to seem an instrument of Divine Providence and has acquired a fame transcending that of any other stream in the world. That river is the Marne. It is the purpose of the present writer to tell as much of the picturesque beauties, the moving romance, and the soul-stirring history of this placid little stream, wandering among its green-carpeted hills, its nestled villages, and its poplar-shaded valleys, as can be compressed within the limits of a single volume — a delicate task, because an adequate narrative of it could hardly be detailed in a dozen. The river upon whose selfsame banks the chains of Asiatic conquest in western Europe have been broken and the chains of affection and mutual esteem between western Europe and America have been forged; upon whose selfsame hills flashed, two thousand years ago, the spears of the Roman legions and, in 1918, the rifles of the French poilu and the Yankee doughboy, is not one whose story can be narrated in a few paragraphs. But how closely its creeping waters have woven together the past and the present may, perhaps, be suggested, however imperfectly, in the following pages.

Physically considered, the Marne is a stream about 525 kilometers, or 328 miles, in length and it drains a watershed of 4,894 square miles. Its source is on the eastern slope of the plateau of Langres, about four miles south of the city of that name, in the Department of the Haute-Marne. Rising at an elevation of 381 meters (1250 feet) above sea level, it runs in a northerly course through the Department of the

Haute-Marne, turns west near St. Dizier and crosses the Department of the Marne, receiving the waters of the Blaise River between St. Dizier and Vitry-le-François. Just before reaching Vitry, where the Saulx River empties into it, it turns northwest, passes Châlons, and resumes a westerly course which it continues past Epernay, turning then somewhat southwest as it traverses a corner of the Department of the Aisne past Château-Thierry. Continuing across the Department of Seine-et-Marne, in which it passes Meaux and receives the tributary waters of the Petit Morin, the Ourcq, and the Grand Morin, it crosses the Department of Seine-et-Oise and finally enters the Department of the Seine, within which it discharges into the River Seine at Charenton, a suburb of Paris.

In its course the Marne traverses a country much diversified in character, as will hereafter be shown. But neither in length nor in the extent of its watershed is it at all imposing as a river. The Rhone, the largest river lying exclusively within France, is 505 miles long and has a basin of 37,798 square miles; the Rhine has a length of 805 miles with a drainage area of 75,000 square miles, while the Hudson, a few miles shorter than the Marne, yet carries off the rainfall of a district nearly three times as large. Compared to the gigantic Missouri-Mississippi, with its 4,221 miles of channel and its watershed nearly as great as all western Europe exclusive of Germany and Austria, the Marne is a brook. Yet its significance in history has been infinitely greater than the combined influence of all the other rivers mentioned. That such is the case does not appear to have been merely the result of accident.

A glance at the map of Europe shows, standing between Italy, they project a nobstructing rampart as far as the Mediand the conglomerate which was recently Austria on the east, the huge bulk of the Alps. To the south, between France and

Italy, they project an obstructing rampart as far as the Mediterranean, to the east they diminish but gradually in the Tyrols. To the northwest the Jura lies like a curving outwork between the valley of the Rhine and those of the Doubs and the Saône, which are virtually extended parts of the valley of the Rhone. Still farther beyond the valley of the Doubs-Saône lies, west of the Rhine, the mass of the Vosges Mountains and, extending southwest from them in a curve beyond that of the Jura, more sweeping but less elevated, are the Monts Faucilles, west of Épinal, the plateau of Langres, the Côte-d'Or, southwest of Dijon, and other plateaus reaching southwest through Bourgogne and Lyonnais.

Around the massive redoubt of nature formed by the Alps and the Jura, through the lowlands of the Doubs Valley which make, at Belfort, a pass to the valley of the Rhine, is one of the regions where the waves of warfare between central and western Europe have washed most persistently. Sometimes its lower, outstanding spurs have been overrun, more rarely its very fastnesses have been painfully penetrated but, in the main, the feet of contending armies have swept past its base on every side. Caesar rested his right flank in security upon it when he went to the conquest of northern Gaul and, clearing a base line on the valley of the Rhone, struck out toward the English Channel. Along its northern slopes and over the broad, open countries beyond, the successive waves of barbarian invaders from the east have always thrown themselves forward upon France. Swinging around this buttress, the Romans met, upon the banks of the Rhine, those Germanic hordes which all their power could never crush and which finally overcame Rome itself. Moving along its northern base through the Pass of Belfort, across the Rhine and into the valley of the Danube, Napoleon

led his armies when, periodically, he found it expedient to flank invaders out of Italy or otherwise to humble the nations to the east. Indeed, for centuries before Napoleon's time armies operating in both directions had utilized that pass in their advances or retreats because it offered the only available road for avoiding the Alps on the south and the Vosges on the north.

Again, north of the Vosges which stand to block invasion of France like a rock in a harbor mouth, come open grounds which, falling away gradually to the coastal plains of Flanders, have always been a fairway for invading armies in either direction. The Rhine, springing from the Alps, is and ever has been the natural dividing line between central Europe and France. But neither France nor Gaul before her nor Rome could always stop invasion on that line when it came in particularly heavy force.

The World War has demonstrated that distribution in depth is the best defense and that the true battle position lies far enough behind the front line to permit of the latter taking up the first shock of the enemy's attack and forcing him to come before the main positions with his initial momentum expended. In former days the theory may not have been clearly understood, but the course of events frequently forced the conclusion. It seems, therefore, a fair hypothesis of the importance of the Marne in history to state that its deep-cut valley, curving northwestward and westward from the plateau of Langres, 75 miles within the Pass of Belfort, to Paris, lies at such a distance from the Rhine as to constitute it the natural battle position against particularly strong attacks from the east. Whether or not the hypothesis will bear analyzing, the fact remains that at several of the most critical junctures in the near and distant past, the Marne has proved the stum-

bling-block over which aggressors from the East have fallen. Under what circumstances they have fallen, through what vicissitudes the people of the valley have passed during the centuries, and what is the appearance and the nature of this lovely river which is a vein of the fair flesh of France, we may now consider.

CHAPTER II

THE CRADLE OF THE MARNE

GOING down the wide, white Roman road which, clearing the frowning gateway and the drawbridge of the Langres Citadel, stretches away southward across the airy uplands of the plateau, one is struck by three outstanding features of his surroundings, the perennial loveliness of the countryside, the breathing presence of antiquity and, on every hand, the evidences of military construction and occupation. The ancient Roman highway, but one of many converging upon the fortress hill of Langres, lies along the plateau like a ribbon through the grain fields, which fall away abruptly on the east into the broad valley of the Marne and more gradually on the west to the patches of woodland which flank the road to Dijon. Behind one, St. Mammès Cathedral, eight hundred years old, rears its square, gray towers above the ramparts of Langres and it needs no practiced eye to discern that the masonry which stands, half revealed, on many of the surrounding hills, flat-topped and abrupt as Montana buttes, are parts of the massive forts, now superannuated, which formerly made of Langres one of the chief strongholds of France as, indeed, in a strategic sense it still is.

These first impressions of natural beauty, antiquity, and martial strength, which are characteristic of the Marne throughout its length, are particularly noticeable as one approaches the covert glen wherein the river keeps its shyly hidden source, which the Roman road passes at a distance of a few hundred yards. Just before reaching it one skirts directly one of the old strongholds, Fort de la Marnotte, standing like a very guardian over the cradle of the stream,

half hidden in the bushes which have grown up around it. Its angled walls stare dumbly across the deep moat and the poppied pasture grounds encompassing it to the river valley and the blue hills beyond. The fort bears ample evidence that it has suffered its share in the late war as an object of experiments in the busy training areas that centered at Langres, for the bottom of the moat and the lip of the glacis are netted with rusty barbed-wire entanglements, while here and there gaping holes in the ground or the masonry show where the shells of practicing artillery have burst. Perhaps at Fort de la Marnotte some of the gunners, American and French, learned the accuracy which later on and farther down the river helped to send the Germans reeling back from the region of Château-Thierry across the hills of Orxois.

Turning down a little byroad which follows through the bushes a shallow depression on whose sunny side lies a long, narrow strip of well-tilled field, one comes in a moment to the edge of the plateau, dropping off so sharply to the valley that the tree tops from below wave almost against one's feet. A path winds steeply down between shoulders of stone to a shady little glen half surrounded by the gray, overhanging rocks and here, from a tangle of vines and shrubs, issues the trickle of crystal water which is the infant Marne.

With the delicate sentiment characteristic of the French in such matters, the government of the Department of the Haute-Marne has, in 1877, protected from pollution the spring of the historic river by enclosing it in a stone vault with a little opening in front whence the tiny stream dances away among the pebbles down the valley. Behind the source a gray shoulder of cliff towers up, embowered in tree branches and beside it a tiny vineyard, hardly five meters square, takes the sunshine of the summer afternoons.

Only a few steps away, in the other face of the curving wall of rock is the spot which is, after the source itself, the chief point of interest hereabout and the one which renders the Marne, at its very birth, a creature of romance. It is the Grotto of Sabinus, a cave in the rock having two entrances, the one looking south, the other east. The interior is very irregular in outline but it is perhaps fifty feet deep, twenty feet wide, and seven feet high. Near the east entrance is a rough pillar, left evidently by the cutting away of the surrounding stone.

The story, one of the most romantic in all history, goes that in the year 71, A. D., which was during the reign of Vespasian as emperor of Rome, Julius Sabinus, chief of the Lingones, a Gallic tribe whose capital was Langres, or Andematunum as it was then called, with other Gallic chiefs revolted against the authority of Rome. Through his grandmother, who had been a very beautiful Gallic maiden in the favor of Julius Caesar, Sabinus claimed to be the grandson of the conqueror. Young, wealthy, handsome, and with all the ambition of his great ancestor, he conspired with other discontented leaders to create rebellion among the Roman legions on the Rhine, he himself aspiring to become emperor in Vespasian's stead.

Fired with this mad scheme, he returned to Langres, stirred up his countrymen by his eloquence to raise a half-armed and undisciplined army of nearly 70,000 men and led it headlong southward toward Besançon, destroying towns and laying waste the country on the way. Soon, however, his motley host began to meet with reverses. Fearing to be enveloped by the legions of the Roman general, Cerealis, who was marching from Italy to the German frontier, Sabinus abandoned his army and fled to his country house at Giselles,

near Laignes and immediately thereafter, with only two faithful freedmen as companions, to the cave at the source of the Marne, then deeply hidden among the primeval forests. From here he caused one of his servants to go to his wife, Eponina, and inform her that he had killed himself.

Eponina, who was famed through the country as well for her virtues as for her beauty, on receiving this news was so overcome by grief that she wept without ceasing for three days and nights, neither sleeping nor eating during that time. Sabinus was informed of this by his servant, and fearing that his wife would die of grief, he sent word to her that he still lived and informed her of his hiding place. Thereafter for seven months Eponina visited him almost nightly at the grotto, returning to her home before morning and so cleverly continuing her rôle of the sorrowing widow that no one suspected that her husband was still living.

In the meantime, the other leaders of the rebellion, less timorous than Sabinus, whose greatest virtue seems to have been his deep devotion to a wife who far outshone him in every other worthy element of character, had kept their army together, returned to Treves and near that city delivered battle to the legions of Cerealis. The latter defeated them utterly, the rebellion was crushed, and Langres gave its submission to Rome. Shortly after, Sabinus, hoping to obtain pardon for his share in the revolt, made a secret journey to Rome with the intention of throwing himself upon the mercy of Vespasian. He soon learned, however, that there was little prospect of his receiving clemency and, fearing to be apprehended and executed, he fled again to his cave by the Marne.

Now ensued nine long years during which Sabinus remained there, his faithful wife being with him most of the time, but sallying forth at intervals to obtain news of condi-

The valley of the Marne from the base of the ramparts, Langres
[*Page 5*]

Grotto of Sabinus by the source of the Marne
[*Page 9*]

tions at Rome and to learn whether prospects were any brighter for the pardon of her husband. While they were existing thus, Eponina gave birth to twins, whom she reared, to paraphrase the poetical words of one French historian, as a lioness rears her whelps, hidden from the light of day and nursed in the entrails of the earth. At the end of the nine years by some unlucky accident the Romans discovered the hiding place of Sabinus and his family. They were surprised in the cave and taken prisoners. Eponina and her children would have been left in Gaul by the Romans and, indeed, Sabinus himself seems to have mustered the courage to beseech his wife to remain behind. But her devotion would not permit it; with her children she accompanied her husband to Rome. When they were brought into the presence of Vespasian, Eponina threw herself at his feet and weeping plead for her husband's life. "These," said she, holding her children up before the emperor, "are the fruits of my exile. I have nourished them in a cave in order that we might be more numerous to bring to you our supplications."

Her eloquence moved even Vespasian to tears, but he was inexorable regarding the fate of Sabinus; the would-be usurper must be executed. At last Eponina, seeing that pleadings were in vain, arose and with dignity demanded that she be permitted to die with Sabinus. "Grant me this grace, Vespasian," said she, "for thy aspect and thy laws weigh upon me a thousand times more heavily than life in darkness and under the earth."

Her biting scorn stung the emperor to grant her request; with Sabinus she and her infants were led to death. It has been well said that it was because of the devotion of his wife that Sabinus' name has been preserved among those of heroes. But the name of the superb Gallic matron has also lived down

the ages and will live as the worthy prototype of that galaxy of heroines which, led by Jeanne d'Arc, has given to the womanhood of France such a glorious place in history.

To return to the center of interest of this romance of the long-dead past, the grotto by the source of the Marne, one finds on walking a few feet from its entrance along the path skirting the foot of the cliff, a shrine chiseled in the face of the rock containing, behind an iron grating, a small figure of the Virgin. Both here and within Sabinus' cave the smooth face of the stone bears what seems from a casual inspection a fairly complete penciled roster of the American Expeditionary Forces and also of the mobilized army of France. As often happens in this form of publicity, however, it was an American who achieved the crowning triumph by getting his pencil in some way far enough between the bars of the grating to inscribe "Don Morrison, Lawrence, Kansas," upon the pedestal supporting the Virgin. Scattered here and there under the trees empty "corned willie" or "gold fish" cans testify to the popularity of the spot as a place of relaxation when the Army Schools at Langres were overflowing with American soldier students.

From the long, low entrance to the Grotto of Sabinus the view extends southeast and east down gentle slopes of grain and pasture, interspersed with clumps of trees and an occasional solitary oak, across the closely embowered buildings of the farm de la Marnotte and the red roofs and church tower of Balesmes to the orderly rows of poplars which, in the far distance, trace the highroads to Corlée and St. Vallier. Following down the hillside to the farm de la Marnotte, the first habitation along the thickly peopled Marne, one may learn not without interest that in its fields, thickly starred with flaming poppies and the blue of cornflowers, have been

unearthed within modern times Roman baths, the foundations of Roman buildings, and many coins of the same epoch.

Pursuing still the same descending road, one comes presently past stone walls and hedges into the rambling street of Balesmes, the first village on the Marne. Between the scattered houses of the hamlet and the apple trees bending over the walls and now and then beneath tiny bridges, the infant stream murmurs over the rocks, sometimes almost losing itself under the overhanging branches of rose bushes, heavy with bloom, or swaying tufts of water grass. Here and there a few stepping-stones across it are sufficient means of communication for the dwellers in neighboring houses, for it is scarcely six feet wide or more than five or six inches deep. Nevertheless in Balesmes the Marne receives its first tributary, another brooklet of about its own volume. The village church lifting its square Romanesque tower upon a little knoll in the center of the town has in its flagged floor, tombstones dating from 1619, for Balesmes, like nearly every French hamlet, has its bit of history. Along the Marne lies an old mill built on the site of an ancient hospital which was founded there in 1180 by the Brothers Hospitallers of the Order of St. John and which passed in 1250 to the Order of Malta, while near the church was formerly a fortified stronghold belonging to the Priory of St. Geosmes.

This St. Geosmes, or Sancti Gemini, though some kilometers back from the Marne, was such an important factor in the early history of this region that it deserves a brief description. The hamlet of this name lies just west of Fort de la Marnotte on the Langres-Dijon road, at the junction of two of the ancient Roman highways. Tradition says that it was the scene in the second century, A. D., of the martyrdom of three Christians who were triplet brothers: Speusippi, Meleusippi,

and Eleusippi. By all the logic of euphony they should have hailed from Mississippi but the record is clear that they were born in Langres. They had been converted from paganism by St. Bénigne and were the first Christians in this region to suffer martyrdom by fire. Later they were canonized under the name of the Saints Jumeaux, meaning twins, whence the modernized St. Geosmes. In honor of the martyrs there was established here an abbey which became very rich, the prior of it being lord of seven neighboring parishes. In this church in 859 was held an ecclesiastical council in the presence of Charles I, the Bald, and in it St. Geofrid, Abbot of Wiremtheuse, in Ireland, was buried in 1716 after his death at Langres as he was returning from a journey to Rome.

Because the tire of an automobile on the way to the American Tank Center at Bourg, a few kilometers farther down the road, gave out at precisely this point one day in the summer of 1918, the writer had a chance to enter St. Geosmes Church under interesting circumstances. At that time the church was in use as a hospital for wounded men of some of the French colonial units from North Africa and the nave and transepts were full of cots on which were lying these coal-black soldiers, attended by a few French poilus. The interior, dark with age, shows a construction seen only in some of the most ancient churches antedating the eleventh century, the side walls sloping outward very perceptibly from floor to ceiling, producing a curious appearance as if the roof were collapsing. One of the French soldiers, anxious to display all there was to be seen, produced a candle, unlocked and lifted a ponderous trapdoor in the floor and led the way down a long flight of clammy stone steps to a Roman crypt beneath the church containing some massive and handsomely carved pillars and several stone sarcophagi whose

frigid aspect made a shell hole seem an acceptable place of interment by contrast. Only a small portion of the Roman crypt remains accessible, the rest of it having been filled up with rocks during the French Revolution—a curiously laborious method, it would seem, of showing contempt for religious things.

If one goes out of Balesmes on the poplar-shaded road running northeast and then turns northwest by the crossroad toward Corlée and Langres, he crosses just short of Corlée the deep cut of the Marne and Saône Canal and looking along it, sees at a distance of a quarter of a mile the entrance to the tunnel through which it runs, for more than 5 kilometers, beneath the heights of the Langres Plateau to issue finally at its southern end in the head of the valley of the Vingeanne River which it then follows to the Saône. The canal tunnel passes directly beneath Balesmes where occurs, therefore, the curious phenomenon of the Marne, whose impounded floods farther down stream furnish water for the canal, flowing in its natural bed above the latter. Through the tunnel water communication is maintained between streams emptying respectively into the English Channel and the North Sea on the one side and into the Mediterranean on the other, for the Marne, the Meuse, and the Saône all have their sources near together in the highlands of the Department of the Haute-Marne and all are connected by canals.

The square church tower of Corlée, rising on the hill slope just beyond the canal as if guarding, like a shepherd his flock, the clustered red roofs of the village in the hollow below, lies just short of a slight crest from which suddenly, across the grain fields and meadows, Langres again appears, its cathedral and fortress walls sharply silhouetted against the northwestern sky. From whatever standpoint viewed and

whether scenically or historically, Langres, at whose feet the Marne comes into being, is not and never has been inconspicuous. Leaving the trickling river and the much more pretentious canal in the valley, the road climbs up the hillside through the Faubourg des Anges, passes beneath one of the double archways of the Porte des Moulins and entering the narrow thoroughfare of the Rue Diderot between solid masses of antique houses, leads into the heart of the town whose birth no chronicle records because that event is shrouded in the twilight of prehistoric Gaul.

CHAPTER III

LANGRES THE ANCIENT

SOMEONE once ventured a guess at the age of Langres. It was probably as good a guess as any other investigator can offer. The Abbé Mangin, who flourished about 1765 as grand vicar of the Diocese of Langres, remarked in one of his learned works that "one is led to believe that it was perhaps built a little time after the Deluge and after the rash enterprise of the Tower of Babel had miscarried." Others have ascribed its foundation to one Longo, King of the Celts about 1800 B. C. At all events, Langres is undoubtedly of Celtic origin and of a very early date as has been proven by the numerous objects such as statues, vases, urns, tombs, and building foundations which have been excavated there. It is said, moreover, that excavations have disclosed the fact that the hill on which the city stands, 1,550 feet above sea level, is many feet higher than it originally was owing to the building of town after town upon the ruins of its predecessors as these came to destruction in the almost unnumbered wars of the passing centuries.

A contingent of Lingones, the Gallic tribe inhabiting the country of which Andematunum, later Langres, was the capital and the metropolis, accompanied the expedition of the Bellovici which crossed the Alps and descended upon the plains of northern Italy in 615 B. C., in the time of Tarquin the Elder. Other Lingones penetrated the Iberian Peninsula and settled in the most fertile parts of what is now Spain.

In 58 B. C., the year in which Julius Caesar moved into Transalpine Gaul, turned the Helvetii back into Switzerland at the passes of the Rhone and Bibracte (Autun), and defeated

the invading Germans under Ariovistus in the Gallic plain of Alsace and drove them before him across the Rhine, he found the Lingones robust warriors and their hilltop city, as it always has been, a stronghold worth controlling. He sought and obtained alliance with them so that this warlike tribe, curiously enough, at the most important juncture of its history became peaceably subject to Rome without the bloody subjugation on the battle field which was the fate of most of the Gallic tribes. Caesar did the Lingones many favors during the years of his Gallic wars, frequently staying in their country himself and making there the winter quarters of the legions. They, in turn, furnished him with an excellent and numerous cavalry which he employed not only in Gaul but later in the civil war with Pompey and in his conquests of Italy and Spain.

The great Roman master of strategy made of Langres itself a stronghold and the center of a system of strongholds of which he saw the full advantages. Holding this point, as he himself proved a little later, he would be in a position to quell any revolt in case conquered Gaul should rise against him, while it was, moreover, an excellently placed base for operations against the Germans on and beyond the Rhine. The hilltop of Langres he entirely surrounded with a strong wall, having a wide and deep ditch and high towers at frequent intervals. The outlying stations, oppidums or intrenched camps, generally capable of being used as winter cantonments for troops, were most often situated at the junctions of two or more roads but always in positions so tactically defensible that even the later leaders of the Middle Ages, comparatively ignorant of military art, could see their advantages and built their feudal castles on, or near, the ruins of the Roman works.

Under Julius Caesar, or his successors, was laid out the system of Roman roads, the greatest in all Gaul, which radiated in every direction from Langres, twelve of them in all binding the country together in a military sense and furnishing convenient communications. So substantially were they built that many of them today are still in use. Striking nearly always straight across the country, images, as has been expressively said, of the inflexible Roman will which went straight to its object regardless of obstacles, from Langres these roads reached, the first to Toul, Metz, and Treves, the second to Naix-aux-Forges, near Bar-le-Duc, and thence to Reims, and Treves, the third to the Rhine by Avricourt and La Marche, the fourth to the valley of the Mouzon, the fifth to Bourbonne, the sixth to the Rhine by way of Basle, the seventh to Besançon, the eighth to Lyon by the existing road to Dijon, the ninth to Alessia and Autun, the tenth to Sens, the eleventh to Reims by Bricon and the twelfth to the valley of the Blaise by Faverolles and Marnay.

These roads and many other public works in Langres and vicinity were built largely by the legions of Julius Caesar at times when they were in rest between actual campaigns, the practice of "manicuring the roads" with "resting" troops evidently being as popular then as it was two thousand years later. Caesar's generosity with fatigue details was especially the result of his gratitude to the Lingones for their neutrality during the formidable revolt of the Gauls led by Vercingetorix, in 52 B. C. This uprising burst forth as the result of a great Gallic council held at Autun. Caesar and his army at the time were at Sens. Vercingetorix, with forces much superior in point of numbers, moved northeast from Autun by Dijon in the direction of Langres with the object of cutting the Roman line of retreat upon the Rhone and

Italy. He accomplished this object, but Caesar, after preventing by quick maneuvering considerable bodies of Gallic levies from joining Vercingetorix, directed his own march from Alessia upon Langres, desirous of putting this strong place, which was neutral and therefore a safe base, in his rear and then delivering battle as soon as possible. Before the enemy could get astride his road he gained his communications with Langres and deploying by the right flank on the heights of Prauthoy and Selongey, faced the Gallic Army as it was debouching from the valley of the Vingeanne River. The Roman kept the tactical defensive, repulsed the enemy's impetuous attack and then, advancing his left flank at the right moment, forced the Gauls into a retreat which, pressed by the Romans, became a disastrous rout. The legions pursued closely, penned up the enemy in Alessia and in the famous siege of that place, ending in the surrender of Vercingetorix, completely quelled the rebellion.

The Lingones, whose passive aid contributed not a little to the success of the Roman arms, however they may have been accused by conscience for their inglorious attitude during the desperate struggle of their country against its conquerors, profited materially thereby and remained in Roman favor long after the passing of the first Caesar. Langres became the headquarters of administration and supply of a large military district, a financial center for the collection of public revenues, and a provincial capital of importance. Among the buildings erected in the city under Augustus and Diocletian were a capitol, an amphitheater, several temples, and a college of augurs. An arch of triumph attributed to Marcus Aurelius after his war with the Germans still exists, beautifully preserved, as the walled-up "Gallo-Roman Gate" familiar to all American soldiers who were stationed at Langres,

beside the National Road from Chaumont as it climbs the hillside on the west of the town. The concentration of highways at Langres gave to the city great commercial advantages and after the abortive revolt of Sabinus, in 71 A. D., the city was so large, that after rendering its submission to the Romans, it was able to appease their anger by offering to Domitian, the proconsul of Gaul, a contingent of seventy thousand soldiers for the Imperial armies.

But the prosperity of Langres as a Gallo-Roman metropolis declined as the Roman Empire sank toward its dissolution, and as its strong hands relaxed, Gaul became a prey to the barbaric invasions and the internal disorders which marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. No longer upon the Rhine the eagles of the legions overawed those eternal enemies of Gaul and of later France who dwelt beyond its rushing waters. The first army, or horde, of German and Vandal invasion under the leadership of the ferocious Chrocus, surged across the frontier about the middle of the third century A. D. In the year 264 they reached and began the siege of Langres.

The inhabitants, knowing that they could expect no mercy from their assailants, resisted with the courage of despair, but to little purpose. The Lingones at this day, in advance of many of the Gauls, were already thoroughly Christianized, the first martyr of the faith in the city having been put to death in 165 while the first bishop, St. Senateur, came into power about the year 200. Pressed now by savage enemies the people, at the end of their material resources, turned to their bishop, St. Didier, a man celebrated for his virtues and his piety. He held a parley with Chrocus and besought him to have mercy upon the people of the city, offering himself to be burned alive as a sacrifice to save them from massacre. The barbarian chief spurned the offer and St. Didier returned

into the city, shut himself in the cathedral and devoted himself to prayer. Shortly the enemy forced one of the gates and the warriors spreading through the streets began a wholesale slaughter. Again the bishop, in his robes of office, appeared before Chrocus and plead for the people. The only reply of the German commander was to order the death of the bishop and of all his Christian followers. As he knelt in prayer the head of the prelate was shorn off with a sword and his blood spurted over the prayer-book which he clasped in his hands. A thousand years later according to popular belief the blood of the martyr bishop was still bright upon this relic, which was preserved and became an object of pilgrimage to crowds in search of healing. Langres was sacked by the barbarians and its first cathedral was reduced to ruins, but Chrocus, after ravaging all the surrounding country, upon advancing to Arles for the purpose of destroying that city, was at last defeated and killed.

It required a long time for Langres to recover from the effects of Chrocus' attack, but under the judicious rule of the Roman governor, Constance Chlore, it had regained something of its earlier population and prosperity when, after the lapse of thirty-six years, the Germans, undismayed by various minor defeats at the hands of the Romans and constantly growing stronger as their adversaries grew weaker, again broke across the Rhine and swept westward. Langres was their chief objective and Constance Chlore hastened to the aid of the city. Upon his arrival, the enemy being close to the place, he rashly declined to await the reinforcements for which he had sent and which were rapidly approaching and attacked the Germans at once with very inferior numbers.

The result was that he was defeated, he himself wounded,

and his troops driven in rout toward Langres. The gates having been closed, the wounded Roman leader was gotten into the city only with the greatest difficulty, being hoisted to the top of the wall in a basket let down with ropes. Once inside, however, he was not too badly injured to take command of the Langrois, all of whom able to bear arms had, meanwhile, assembled in haste. His reinforcements, likewise, arriving under the walls about five hours after his disastrous preliminary combat, the Roman general placed himself at the head of the whole force and again advanced from the city.

The Germans, confident that their victory was already as good as won, had camped on the opposite hills of the Marne near the still-existing village of Peigney, where they were holding high carousal. The Gallo-Roman forces crossed the river and attacked them furiously. This time the effort was completely successful, the Germans according to no doubt grossly exaggerated legend, leaving 60,000 dead upon the field of their rout but, at all events, being driven precipitately out of the country. The name of Peigney itself is thought to be a corruption of the Latin word *pugna,* meaning "battle," while scattered over the plateau between the Marne, the Liez, and the Neuilly brook, on which the conflict occurred, numerous bones and weapons have been found in modern times.

It is worth remembering that in the course of its existence since the days of Julius Caesar, France has been invaded by the Germans forty-two times — that is on an average of once every forty-seven years. It might seem that after two thousand years a sense of discouragement concerning their ability ever to conquer France would begin to permeate even the predatory central tribes of Europe. But a distinguished Roman general, Celarius, over fifteen hundred years ago

pointed out to the Gauls a truth as pregnant today as it was then, when he said to them: "the self-same motives for invading Gaul will ever endure among the Germans; love of pleasure and love of money. Ever will they be seen to relinquish their heaths and bogs and rush to your fertile plains, with a view to rob you of your fields and make slaves of you."

The fortunate issue of the struggle just described was for unhappy Langres the last victory of many a century. Held in check with increasing difficulty by the armies of the successive Roman emperors, Constantine, Julian, and Valentinian, the insatiable Germans forced the frontiers of the Roman province of Gaul finally and completely in the commencement of the fifth century and poured their devastating hordes into that devoted country and across it into Spain and Italy. The territories of Langres, Troyes, and Reims were ravaged successively by the Vandals, the Suevi, the Burgundians, and other Germanic tribes and at length in 451 the last abyss of woe was reached in the frightful invasion of the Huns under Attila (or Etzel, as he is called in the German language). Langres, which still possessed its Gallo-Roman fortifications, tried in vain to defend them. Attila carried the city by assault, devoted it to flames and reduced it to a heap of ashes. Nothing was left and after the cataclysm the Bishop of Langres, Fraterne, was obliged to remove the seat of his diocese to Autun as, beneath the shell fire of the Germans of 1914, Monseigneur Ginisty, Bishop of Verdun, was obliged to remove the seat of his diocese to Bar-le-Duc.

Soon after the final defeat of Attila at Châlons-sur-Marne the last sparks of Roman power expired in Gaul and the anarchy of the Dark Ages assumed full sway. Langres, under the rule of the Burgundians, was rebuilt, but as little

more than a stronghold where the wretched people of the countryside could gather as a final refuge from successive invaders, both French and foreign. Clovis, who put the last Romans out of northern Gaul in 486, adopted Christianity and uniting all the Franks under the Merovingian dynasty, began to give form to modern France, captured the place in his war against Gondebaud, King of Burgundy. It is a familiar fact that Clovis, whose conversion to Christianity was one of the important episodes of history, was persuaded to the step by his wife, Clotilde. But it is perhaps less well known that Clotilde herself became a Christian through the efforts of the Bishop of Langres, Apruncule, to whom is attributed also the establishment of the first public schools of Langres.

Most miserably for the people of northern France generation followed generation and in the ninth century the country about Langres was ravaged year after year by the Normans. Those who remained of the unhappy inhabitants dwelt like beasts in the depths of the forests, often dying of famine until, everything having been plundered, there was nothing left to excite the greed of the invaders who came, not like a passing cyclone, as Attila had come, but like a slow pestilence destroying at leisure. Men, houses, flocks, fields, vineyards, it was said, were gone as completely as if the ocean had rolled over the country, and in 891, Bishop Geilon died of grief over the desolation of his people, which he was powerless to relieve.

Conditions, however, now began to improve a little as the local nobles found increasing means for protecting their feudatory possessions from the aggressions of neighbors and as the supreme authority of the kings of France gained gradually in strength. The first Count of Langres was Estulphe

who led 3,000 Langrois soldiers in the army that followed the Saracens into Spain and who, with his followers, perished in 772 in that battle of Roncevalles which was immortalized in one of the greatest battle epics ever composed, *The Song of Roland.* Under the successors of Charlemagne the counts and the county of Langres remained for a long time virtually independent between the great feudal domains of Champagne, Lorraine, Franche-Comté, and Burgundy. But in 1179, Bishop Gaulthier of Burgundy, having ransomed the place after its capture in a siege, offered it to King Louis VII of France on condition that it should never again be alienated from the crown. The offer was accepted and thenceforth Langres remained under the royal rule and protection, although the latter often proved a very slight guarantee of safety.

During the period from 1096 to 1270 during which the Crusades occurred, many of the nobility of Langres and its vicinity, like those of every other Christian land, took part in these expeditions followed by large numbers of their retainers. Their long absences from home in such a cause reflected credit upon their prowess and religious zeal, but certainly tended to lessen their power in their native land. While they were away the burghers of the larger towns, remaining at home, gradually secured from successive kings increased rights and privileges in the way of charters of self-government for their communes and exemptions from certain taxes and other obligations, all in exchange for their acceptance of the condition that they support the royal authority with arms in case of need. It was an excellent arrangement, both from the king's standpoint and from that of the burghers, for the former thus acquired a formidable weapon for holding in awe the powerful feudal vassals who were often

rebellious, while the latter gained not only their chartered privileges but also strength to resist the exactions of oppressive liege lords and the depredations of neighboring barons. In evolution, the enfranchisement of the communes presently developed a distinctly new sort of military force. A French military historian, General Susane, in his *Histoire de l'Infanterie,* says:

> In that time of disorder and brigandage, when people were not safe at three hundred steps from the gates of the city, when nothing was more common than to hear the sinister strokes of the alarm bell, when there reigned among all the peaceable population a great terror of the barons and of their followers; when, moreover, the *gendarmerie* were enemies rather than protectors, it did not suffice merely to carry upon the rolls of the militia the names of all men capable of bearing arms. It was necessary, also, to have recourse to volunteers and to mercenaries. It was under the reign of the warlike Philip-Augustus that the celebrated companies of arbalesters (crossbowmen) were formed — the first effort in France at the organization of infantry troops.

These companies of arbalesters, who later after the introduction of gunpowder became known as arquebusiers (musketeers), were hired by their respective communes and kept themselves in a state of military efficiency for the protection of the commune and the service of the sovereign when required. Having an underlying common interest, the companies of the different towns eventually formed a sort of union, thus further increasing their prestige. So popular did the service become and so keen was the rivalry between the young men of the country for places in its ranks that little by little military exercises, by way of qualification, became one of the most important occupations of the people and the whole militia acquired, almost unconsciously, some degree of training. This fact was of particular importance from the king's standpoint, which in that day meant practically the national

standpoint, and the development of the communal troops exercised a very potent influence upon the history of the country.

The great *seigneurs,* though nominally vassals of the king and protectors of the land against German invaders, had become, in fact, the terrors of the realm. Holding their massively fortified châteaux in places the least accessible to attack, and at the same time the most convenient for marauding on the countryside and along the few existing roads, no traveled way was safe from the depredations of these "robber barons" nor was hardly any individual respected in their eyes. These scions of ancient and illustrious families which had shared the glories of Charlemagne and carried the banners of the cross into the Holy Land, degenerated now to the level of highwaymen and petty partisans carrying on feudal warfare with one another, often sought to soothe their consciences for crimes committed by bestowing great legacies of lands, buildings, or money upon the church which thus, in turn, acquired enormous temporal power. But even such a personage as the Bishop of Langres, who in this way had become one of the dominating ecclesiastics and one of the greatest secular powers in the kingdom, being one of the Twelve Peers of France, found it not always safe to venture with his cavalcade outside the high towered walls of his episcopal city, for the barons of the castles along the road, whether or not they nominally owed him allegiance, were not to be trusted. The organized militia of the larger towns became an effective weapon to use against such disturbers of the peace and it very soon began to be put to such use.

Among the most important châteaux of Bassigny connected with the history of Langres either by reason of hostilities or because the Bishop of Langres had rights over them, may be

mentioned those of Aigremont, Clefmont, and Bourmont. The village of Bourmont, appertaining formerly to the château of that name, will be remembered by many Americans as the seat of the Advance Quartermaster Depot 7, where the first American railhead was established in December, 1917, and around which were camped at different times in the summer and fall of 1918, the Forty-second, Seventy-eighth, and Eighty-second Divisions. All of the châteaux mentioned were located from 25 to 35 kilometers northeast of Langres and dominated the high country between the Marne and the Meuse. Other important châteaux were those of Bourg, Montsaugon, Cusey, Coiffy-le-Haut, Angoulevant, and Humes. The château of Bourg, ruling the neighborhood in which, in 1918, was located the great American Tank Center 302 and the School of Tank Instruction, overlooked and controlled the course of the Vingeanne River. The structure consisted of a number of great towers and a donjon from the summit of which the Bishop of Langres, who possessed it, could look down upon his numerous fiefs, his vision embracing from there, so it has been picturesquely recorded, "all the high valley of the Vingeanne, the confines of Montsaugonais, going thence to rest upon the hills of Burgundy, the junction of which with the plateau of Langres is lost at the horizon in the blue mists of morning."

The high-handed conduct of the local lords of these various castles finally became so unendurable that the people of the larger towns exerted their military power to destroy the places and reduce their lawless occupants to order. A characteristic expedition of this sort, conducted with due ceremony by the men of Langres, resulted in the demolition of the Château of Angoulevant in 1424. This structure dominated from its seat on the crest of the hills hardly more than

two kilometers east of the walls of Langres the confluence of the Marne and the Liez. It stood on the exact spot now occupied by the Farm of Angoulevant, beside the Reservoir de la Liez; a place conspicuous in the middle distance from that splendid observation point of the Langres ramparts at the table of orientation on the Rue Constance Chlore, from which on clear days the summit of Mont Blanc may be seen. Angoulevant was held in 1424 as a veritable highwaymen's roost by the haughty and enterprising Sire Jean de Maligny. This robber baron having defied the Langrois once too often, on a certain day criers went through the streets of the city calling, in the name of the king, for all masons, carpenters, and joiners to assemble "for the purpose of being conducted where it was necessary that they should be conducted." When troops and artisans were gathered, they marched out of the city and across the Marne Valley and halted at the foot of the château walls. Here a trumpeter, in the name of the king and of the burgesses of Langres, summoned the occupants to surrender. But the Sire de Maligny and his followers, seeing the storm approaching, had fled, so while the horsemen of the assailants kept guard over the countryside, the workmen and foot soldiers entered the abandoned castle and began tearing it down. And according to the ancient legal document, still in existence, which described the proceedings, "no one returned to the city until the said demolition was completed."

Through such enterprises as the above, which was duplicated many times during the ensuing two hundred years against other strongholds of the provincial nobles by the municipal soldiery of Langres, Chaumont, and other towns, the people of Langres gained an increasing confidence in their own strength and an increasing standing with the kings of France. Already in the middle of the fourteenth century, to

protect the growing population which had spread far beyond the old Roman walls, a new and larger system of fortifications was built. In 1465 King Charles VII granted to the city the right to elect four citizens to have charge of the local government and this system was improved upon a century and a quarter later when Henry III, the last of the Valois, authorized the election of a mayor. Nevertheless, though the people were thus rendered largely independent in their local affairs, their nominal lord, the Bishop of Langres, had likewise greatly increased his power. Ranking with the mightiest dukes and counts of the realm he rendered homage to no man save the king himself, but received that of such dignitaries as the Count of Champagne and the Duke of Burgundy, while at the coronation of the king he carried the scepter in the procession and walked ahead of his metropolitan, the Archbishop of Lyon.

During the Hundred Years' War the country about Langres suffered almost without respite the hardships and devastation occasioned by the armies and plundering expeditions of English, Burgundians, and Germans which continually ravaged northern France throughout the decades of that conflict. The city itself on its fortress-crowned cliffs fared better for it was credited with being the strongest city of the realm and a certain amount of industry flourished there, including the manufacture of cannon, the first of which to be made in France were cast at Langres and used at the battle of Poitiers in 1356. Although for a time the city, chiefly through the influence of certain leaders, acknowledged the sovereignty of the English claimant to the throne of France this attitude was not held for long and in the main during the course of the protracted struggle Langres gave its aid to the French king. Therefore when at last, through all the

sordid and selfish factionalism of Armagnacs and Burgundians which alone was dictating the conduct of both parties to the quarrel, there arose that one clear, girlish voice which called on Frenchmen, in the name of forgotten patriotism, to fight for France, Jeanne d'Arc found in the people of Langres ready sympathizers.

It is unnecessary to enter upon the details of the numberless conflicts which centered around Langres or involved her military strength during the civil and religious wars which convulsed France in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But it is of interest to note that between 1498 and 1547, under King Louis XII, and his successor, Francis I, the fortifications were again remodeled and enlarged, one of the principal structures then built being the Tower of Navarre, a perfect example of the military architecture of that epoch which still stands at the southwestern corner of the battlements, a familiar object to most visitors to the hilltop city. Like the rest of the fortifications built at that time the Tower of Navarre was designed by the engineer, Jean de Dammarien. It is a bastion open at the gorge, having very high and massively built circular walls which cause it to resemble some of the towers of the Middle Ages. But it was much more modern in other respects, possessing two tiers of casemates and four rows of batteries commanding the adjacent curtains, while in the center was a spiral ramp permitting a cannon to be placed at a point commanding the upper platforms of the tower itself.

King Francis is said to have been much delighted with the Tower of Navarre, and to have gone over it five or six times during his visit to Langres in 1547, admiring its powerful construction. His solicitude for the frontier city bore good fruit for when the Count of Fürstenberg with a German army

besieged Chaumont in 1523 he dared not attack Langres in like manner, while again in 1552 Charles v, of Germany himself, going with 100,000 men against Metz, Toul, and Verdun, left Langres alone as did another German army under the Baron Pollwiller in 1557, although the latter occupied for some time the greater part of Bassigny. The massive Porte des Moulins, still the principal entrance to the city, was not erected until nearly a century after these passages of warfare, under the reign of King Louis XIII.

Langres adhered to the Catholic party during the Religious Wars but, even so, conducted herself with much independence as on one occasion in 1588 when the Duke of Guise himself at the head of a Catholic army was refused admittance into the walls because his motives were suspected. The Peace of Vervins, in 1598, elicited public rejoicings in Langres and for the following sixteen years a sort of uneasy peace was enjoyed until civil wars again began between powerful political rivals whose intrigues centered about the faction-torn court of Louis XIII. During the brief period of tranquility, however, Langres received from the king or rather, since he was still in his minority, from the regent, his mother, Marie de Medici, certain added privileges for its faithfulness to the crown. Among these was a curious franchise given by letters patent to citizens of the town who proved themselves particularly expert in the use of the bow, the crossbow, and the arquebus. Once each year there were to be raised upon the pinnacle of the cathedral three painted birds to be used as targets. Any marksman who shot down one of these birds with either an arrow or a bullet was exempted during a whole year from guard duty on the ramparts. To any man repeating the performance during three successive years exemption from all taxes was granted during the rest

of his life and the exemption extended to his widow after his death.

In the Thirty Years' War, Cardinal Richelieu made Langres the base of the French armies in eastern France. The results of this struggle were auspicious for the city, the German power in Lorraine being extinguished and that country made a part of France, putting an end to the age-old invasions of France from that quarter.

It must not be supposed that during all her centuries of warfare Langres contributed nothing to the pursuits of peace. A long line of martyrs, saints, and prelates, some of whom attained to the highest places in the church and many of whom contributed extensively to religious and speculative literature, have graced her career from the second century to the present. Eminent artists, authors, statesmen, professional men, and inventors have been among her children. The bishops of Langres, of whom there had been no less than one hundred and four in succession up to 1852, included St. Didier, St. Bernard, the leader of the Second Crusade, and St. Mammès. In secular life the city gave an even greater number of distinguished sons. Some of them have been: Barbier d'Aucour, seventeenth-century author, who wrote a large part of the dictionary of the Academie Français; Toussaint Berchet, Protestant writer of the latter half of the sixteenth century; the Tassels, father, son, and grandson, painters, who between 1550 and 1667 executed many works of art of which a number are to be found today in the cities of eastern France; Nicolas Delausne who about 1640 first used spherical globes for the study of geography; the artist Jean Dubuisson; Pierre Petitot and Foucou, the sculptors; Nicolas Ebaudy de Fresnes, political economist; Nicolas Jensen, who became one of the earliest printers of Venice; Claude Laurent-Bournot,

printer and inventor of improvements in the printing art under the Restoration and Edouard Gaulle, sculptor, whose work appears in many churches and buildings of Paris.

But, among them all, the most famous was unquestionably Denis Diderot, born at Langres, the son of an obscure cutler, in 1713, and died at Paris in 1784, honored by the whole intellectual world. This almost incredibly eloquent conversationalist, brilliant thinker, and versatile and prolific writer, conceived, with D'Alambert, the idea of that encyclopedia which should be not merely a summing up of the existing facts of the world but a system of human knowledge. Almost alone he carried this gigantic project to completion, along with a number of lesser works, between the years 1751 and 1772. Though revealing no scepticism regarding Christianity itself, no disrespect for government and no radical political views which today would seem more than conservative, his work outraged the autocratic government of France under which he lived and the bigoted dogmatism then prevailing in the church because of the reasoned eloquence with which it set forth ideas of religious tolerance and speculative freedom, exalted scientific knowledge, and peaceful industry, and declared the democratic doctrine that the chief concern of a government ought to be the lot of the common people of the nation. Although he lived to shame his enemies, these disturbing doctrines of Diderot more than once brought him persecution from both civil and religious authorities. But they also furnished part of the mental fuel so plentifully supplied by French thinkers of this epoch to eager minds on the other side of the Atlantic, powerfully aiding to produce the American Revolution which, in turn, by its example of successful resistance to tyranny, was a chief encouragement to the French Revolution itself.

Although the walls of Langres were again modernized in 1698 by Marshal Vauban, the great engineer of Louis XIV, who revolutionized the art of fortification and gave to France the most formidable system of frontier defenses she ever had possessed, it was not until one hundred and fifteen years later that the city was again subjected to the ordeal by battle. Then came the magnificent, but losing, struggle of Napoleon, at the head of the armies of Imperial France, against the combined strength of Europe which was fighting, as mankind always will fight, against the encroachments of a conqueror, whatever his power or prestige or his excuse for attempted tyranny over alien peoples. The part played by Langres in this campaign, which was made by the genius of Napoleon one of the most brilliant in all military history, was not a major one but it demonstrated the importance of the city and of the Marne Valley in the military geography of eastern France.

When, following his disastrous defeat at Leipzig in October, 1813, the Emperor of the French had retreated across the Rhine, his enemies, firmly resolved to bring to an end the prolonged struggle for the control of Europe, pursued him promptly with enormously superior numbers. The emperor did not attempt to meet them on the Rhine with his weary and depleted forces but retired to positions well within the frontier where he could defend Paris. Marshal Blücher, with a Prussian army of 80,000 men crossed the Rhine in December and advanced through Nancy toward the Marne at Châlons, while the Prince of Schwarzenberg, violating the neutrality of Switzerland and crossing the Rhine at Basle early in January, 1814, at the head of an army of 160,000 Austrians and Russians, invaded France by way of the Pass of Belfort and the valley of the Saône.

Having cleared the Vosges and the Jura Mountains and gained the more open country beyond, Schwarzenberg turned northwest with the object, first, of gaining contact with Blücher down the valley of the Marne in the vicinity of Chaumont and, second, of pursuing his own march toward Paris by way of the Seine. But barring his way to the accomplishment of either object was the plateau and fortress of Langres. Napoleon, who with his main body was taking up a central position between Châlons and Troyes in order to present a single front to the divided armies of his foes, had directed Marshal Mortier with the Old Guard upon Langres, under orders to hold the place while the main army was forming. Schwarzenberg, however, having been thus far unopposed, was advancing from Belfort by Vesoul with more than his usual energy and a body of his cavalry under the Count of Thurn arrived before the closed gates of Langres on January 9.

The old Vauban defenses, unused for more than a century, had largely gone to ruin and there were no troops to defend them save a handful of National Guards, hastily levied, and a few superannuated veterans, and government employees. But under gallant officers these men determined to present a bold front and if possible to hold Langres until the arrival of Mortier who was rapidly approaching from Reims. A detachment of Austrian cavalry which attempted to rush the Porte des Moulins on the morning of the ninth was driven back by the fire of the defenders. At twilight that evening Colonel Thurn sent forward to the gates under a flag of truce an aide-de-camp bearing a demand for the surrender of the place. The aide was followed at a little distance by a detachment of Bavarian cavalry. As the emissary desired to confer with the mayor the gates were opened to

admit him, but no sooner was the passageway clear than the Bavarian cavalry, violating the flag of truce, dashed forward to seize the gates. The National Guards, however, were too quick for them; a volley drove back the treacherous assailants and the gates were closed.

On the morning of the tenth the main body of the Austrian advance guard under General Hulst arrived before the city from the east. But before they could dispose themselves for an attack the head of column of Mortier's Old Guard, a body of some of the finest veterans still remaining of the Imperial armies, made its appearance from the north after an all-night forced march down the road from Chaumont. The Old Guard was received with wild enthusiasm by the inhabitants and, for the moment, Langres was saved.

But its situation was not, in fact, improved in any permanent way. Marshal Mortier's troops, though of the highest quality, were few in number compared with the hosts of enemies advancing upon them. Napoleon had no reinforcements which he could send and the levy in mass on a country already nearly exhausted of men capable of bearing arms bore scant fruit. Although during the next six days the French outposts held back the enemy's advance detachments, defeating them in numerous lively skirmishes, Schwarzenberg's great front of invasion continued steadily advancing from the south and the northeast. On January 16 Marshal Mortier learned that the enemy was in force at Bourbonne-les-Bains and moving without pause toward Chaumont, directly on the French line of retreat to Bar-sur-Aube and Troyes. The marshal had under his command about 10,000 men; the enemy's widely encircling front contained more than 30,000. Fearing to be cut off from the main French army, Mortier therefore reluctantly ordered the evacuation

of Langres and fell back on Chaumont, his men steadily driving back the enemy's pursuing cavalry in brisk skirmishes at Vesaignes and Marnay.

Next day Langres, powerless to resist, surrendered through its civil authorities and became for the time being the headquarters of Schwarzenberg and of the three allied monarchs, Alexander of Russia, Francis II of Austria, and Frederick William III of Prussia, and the center of a motley throng of their followers, Austrians, Hungarians, Bavarians, Russians, and Cossacks, who thoroughly stripped the city and its environs of every variety of subsistence. In 1815, after Waterloo, the city, defended only by its militia, was a second time captured after a short but fierce resistance, by an Austrian corps under the Count Colloredo and was occupied until late in the following autumn.

In the years succeeding the Napoleonic wars the fortifications of Langres were again brought up to date and greatly enlarged. Then it was that the citadel and the entrenched camp, still in use today, were built directly south of the old city wall, together with the two outlying forts of Peigney and La Bonelle, the first on the hill of the ancient battle across the Marne, the second among the rolling fields of the plateau southwest of the city. Though made capable of sheltering 50,000 troops and feeding them for a considerable period from its immense magazines, the place could be defended by a much smaller number as, in fact, it was during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

In that conflict, so brief but so disastrous for France, Langres found itself threatened by the advancing armies of the hereditary enemy very soon after the first reverses to the French arms near the frontier. Fortunately, in a time when so many proved inefficient, an officer of energy and resolu-

tion was found in command at Langres — General Arbellot. About a nucleus composed of the 2,400 troops, artillery and infantry, which formed the garrison, he gathered a motley array of 12,500 recruits mobilized from the neighboring departments, National Guards, and volunteer citizens, practically none of whom possessed any training or discipline. These men were hurriedly fitted out with such ill-assorted weapons and equipment as could be furnished from the arsenal of the fortress, whose upkeep had been sadly neglected.

The spirits of these hasty levies were reduced to the lowest possible ebb by the constantly arriving news of appalling reverses which were befalling the French armies everywhere. But, nevertheless, by prodigious efforts General Arbellot reduced them to some sort of order, completed a series of temporary earthwork forts on the hills far enough distant to hold the enemy beyond artillery range of the city and occupied with strong detachments a circle of villages still farther distant. Thus his forces stood when early in October the Fourteenth German Corps arrived in the Department of the Haute-Marne from the direction of Strassburg, seized Chaumont, and took up a line of observation just beyond the front held by General Arbellot, eventually surrounding and practically isolating Langres, although at a great distance from the city.

The chief duty of the invaders in this region was to guard the communications between the frontiers of Germany and their armies which were besieging Paris. Over these communications General Arbellot from his central position at Langres, within striking distance of most of the railways and highways of the southern Haute-Marne, was able to hold a constant threat. Many of his untrained troops proved capable raiders and throughout the autumn and winter strong detachments were going out constantly in every direction attacking, with

increasing skill and boldness, German outposts and garrisoned villages, destroying convoys, and wrecking railroad trains. Although from time to time the Germans were largely reinforced, they were never able to threaten Langres seriously and on only a few occasions did any of their troops come within range of the guns of the citadel or even of the encircling forts.

On one of these occasions on December 16, 1870, a French column of 2,000 men with four guns, under command of Major Kock, was making a reconnaissance in force on the highroad to Dijon when it was surprised at Longeau, 10 kilometers south of Langres, by 6,500 Germans with 15 cannon under General von Goltz. All their higher officers, including Major Kock, being killed in the beginning of the action, the French, although they fought bravely, were badly defeated and retreated on Langres. The enemy pursued them to the plateau above Bourg where the fire from Fort de la Marnotte and Fort de la Bonelle halted the pursuit.

At another time, still earlier in the operations, strong German columns advancing from the northeast and the northwest undertook on November 15 to force their way close to Langres for the purpose of discovering where battery positions could be located for the bombardment of the citadel. The column from the northwest did not get very close, but the one from the northeast, after a combat with a company of recruits at Bannes, forced its way into the village of Peigney whence a detachment tried to reach the Marne through the ravine north of that village. The fire from Fort de Peigney soon dislodged the Germans who had entered that place while those in the ravine were driven back by the shells from a French battery at the Langres-Marne railroad station and another on the crest of the Fourches Hill, a small eminence

in the valley a kilometer northwest of the city walls. Today on the summit of Les Fourches, which is itself an artificial mound bearing near its summit the huge stones of a prehistoric cromlech, stands a little circular shrine with domed roof sheltering a statue of the Virgin, which looks down upon the Chaumont road and commemorates the gratitude of the people of Langres that in the war of 1870 from this spot the Germans were brought to a halt in their nearest approach to the city.

Following the surrender of Paris, the armistice which terminated hostilities was signed on January 28, 1871, and immediately thereafter the French commander at Langres and the German commander at Chaumont entered into a convention by which the benefits of the armistice were extended to Langres and the troops holding it. Thus the faithful defenders achieved for Langres a unique distinction among the French fortresses for it never came into possession of the Germans either before or after the armistice, although even Belfort fell into their hands in February, 1871, despite the gallant defense of Colonel Denfert-Rochereau.

In the years which intervened between the Franco-Prussian war and the World War of 1914, a circle of new concrete and steel turret forts was built around Langres at a distance of 15 to 18 kilometers. The bitter experiences of such fortresses as Liège, Namur, and Antwerp proved conclusively that such structures cannot stand against modern artillery, but those of Langres were never thus tested. A great French military center during the first part of the war, the city derived its greatest importance in the final months of the conflict from the establishment there of the American Army Schools, and from the autumn of 1917 until the spring of 1919 most of the forts around the place as well as the cita-

del and the city itself were thronged with officers and soldiers in olive drab, most of them connected in one way or another with some of these institutions of military education.

The Army Schools were a necessary outgrowth of the highly technical nature of modern warfare, which obliges not only many officers, but also great numbers of enlisted men, to acquire close familiarity with the duties and the material of their respective branches of the service. Very soon after arriving in France, in the summer of 1917, General Pershing, commanding the American Expeditionary Forces, took steps to establish proper centers of instruction for the troops of his command as they should arrive from America. The work was started with the assistance of a number of experienced officers and men of the French and British services who were later either replaced or supplemented by Americans, after the latter had become proficient.

The general instruction system embraced three grades of schools; those of the division, the corps, and the army. Each division within its own training area had a school and training center for the instruction of its own personnel; each corps had an instruction center for the training of replacements, officers and men, and all grades of commanders for four combat divisions. The army itself maintained a group of schools for the preparation of instructors for the corps and division schools and for the instruction of staff officers, candidates for commissions, and officers and men of the various special branches of army troops.

It was at Langres that there centered the group of Army Schools which filled the city with Americans and gave to their period of occupation an importance which will cause it to be recorded in the history of the city as an episode as significant as any in its long and checkered career. Most of the

schools began functioning in December, 1917, or soon thereafter, and continued to graduate classes of increasing size until several months after the armistice, sending into the fighting army a large proportion of the rapidly but effectively trained men who as officers or noncommissioned officers led American troops in their career of uninterrupted victory.

During their existence of approximately a year and a half, the Langres schools were attended by a grand total of more than 45,000 officers and soldiers—95,000 including the attendants at the Gas School—who, in addition to the troops stationed around the city and more or less connected with the schools, gave to the place the appearance of an American military camp, the civilian population of less than 9,500 being quite submerged in the flood of olive drab. Nevertheless, it was the quaint, closely-packed buildings of the old town itself which always made the picturesque background to the crowds of stalwart young soldiers from the New World thronging the streets and to the processions of automobiles and trucks, varying from the big, olive-drab limousines of general officers to busy little Y. M. C. A. Fords and lumbering "quad" trucks, bizarre with the hues of cubist camouflage, which often gave to the Rue Diderot the aspect of a business thoroughfare in an American city.

Along the Rue Diderot, in fact, were scattered most of the "cinema" theaters, cafés, and shops which attracted the patronage of doughboys at leisure. Few Americans who were stationed in Langres for any length of time can have forgotten the Hôtel de l'Europe, below the College, whose long, narrow dining-room, gas lighted and paneled with wood, was the nightly gathering place of a throng of hungry officers and enlisted men who possessed the price, eager for a meal which would vary the monotony of the mess hall. At that hour the

tiny office was always occupied by a post-office line of waiting guests, gazing hungrily into the smoke-blue atmosphere of the dining-room and demanding from the frenzied waitresses, *une place, deux places,* or *six places,* as the case might be.

But the little square surrounding the statue of Diderot was the center most frequented. Perhaps few who looked at the figure of the great encyclopedist, gazing benevolently down the street from his tall pedestal and quite dominating the surrounding small shops and cafés, were conscious that this statue was the work of the same sculptor, Frederic Bartholdi, who created the Statue of Liberty which stands in New York Harbor, the gift of the French Republic to the United States.

Farther afield among the obscure streets are a number of interesting places never seen, probably, by numbers of Americans owing either to lack of time or inclination, but familiar to many others. Undoubtedly the chief of these, as it is the most conspicuous building of the city, is the Cathedral of St. Mammès, dedicated to the third-century martyr who was born in Caesarea of Cappadocia and who became the first Bishop of Langres and later the patron saint of the city. This building, begun in the twelfth century, represents in its interior the varying but happily combined forms of the architecture of the Transition period. Its façade and tall twin towers are of the eighteenth century and though conspicuous are not considered of much architectural excellence. But they rise above a church whose interior, though dark, is very impressive with its six bays and two side aisles divided by massive square piers and applied columns which support an upper gallery, or triforium, whose smaller columns are in the Romanesque style. The red stone of the columns themselves contrast becomingly with their white Gallo-Roman capitals

and with the pink shade of the walls. The perspectives within the cathedral are impressive, even though the nave has a height of only 75 feet and there are many objects of artistic interest to be found in the church and its chapels. Such are the beautiful fourteenth-century alabaster figures of Notre Dame la Blanche, "the White Lady;" the font made in 1549, the sixteenth-century tapestries in the transept chapels depicting the life and martyrdom of St. Mammès, the paintings attributed to Rubens and Correggio in the Chapel of Relics, a Renaissance bas-relief showing, among other scenes, a churchly procession walking toward the walled city of Langres, and a number of statues of church dignitaries of later periods.

Not far from the Porte des Moulins, St. Martin's Church, whose tall tower is almost as conspicuous above the city as are those of the cathedral, although it contains much less of interest than does the latter, has a "Crucifixion" by François Gentil which is of unusual merit. The Museum, housed in a side street in the old Church of St. Didier, holds many pieces of Gallo-Roman statuary and sculpture excavated at different times in and around Langres as well as specimens of ancient coins and metal-work, particularly Gallic and Gallo-Roman, and a small, but valuable collection of paintings, some of them by such distinguished artists as Luminais, Tassel, Teniers, Vanloo, and Corot.

There are numerous ancient houses in Langres having quaint and beautiful stone- and woodwork outside and much of interest within, the northern part of the city on the streets leading to the ramparts being particularly rich in such souvenirs of the past. Notable among them is the Renaissance house near the Museum which is now used as a residence by the Bishop of Langres. In an ancient dwelling on a side

street north of the cathedral one may pass through an inconspicuous doorway and a long, dark passage which comes eventually to a courtyard in which stands a venerable well with a balustraded stone wall behind it. Both the wall and the massive well curb are rich with carving, weathered faint by the passing centuries, for both are said to be relics of the Gallo-Roman epoch. This well is still in use today and as it was utilized to some extent by American troops in the city it may well be that against that same curb have leaned Roman soldiers wearing the cuirass of the legions and soldiers in the flannel shirts and woolen breeches of the United States service.

In many such reflections one may indulge in this city, old when Christ was upon earth and still virile today although as many centuries have passed over it as years over some thriving cities of America. May it be that the presence within her borders of the soldiers from overseas has inaugurated for Langres a period of prosperity and peace transcending any that she has enjoyed in her long and often tempestuous past.

CHAPTER IV

PAST BLUE BASSIGNY HILLS

THERE is a pleasant patchwork carpet of many-tinted fields rolling away toward the river from the steep slopes below the city as one leaves Langres through the Faubourg des Franchises by the road that curves around the foot of the battlements. Beneath great trees that mingle their branches over it the highway runs, while above the treetops on the left rise the great gray walls of the Tower Piquante, the Tower Longe-Porte, and the Tower St. Jean, with the massive masonry of the ancient curtains between them. The road, soon joining the National highway, passes the peak of Les Fourches, the dome of its shrine just visible above the trees surrounding it, and comes directly to Langres-Marne, the suburb containing the railroad yards and the chief station of Langres, connected with the city by a rack-and-pinion railway to the top of the plateau. At the lower end of the yards the slender thread of the Marne is spanned by a stone bridge beneath which, in the marshy ground below, cows graze peacefully among clusters of flowering bushes, indifferent to the puffing locomotives a few yards away. The National Road stretches on through the hamlet of Pont-de-Marne and thence northeast toward Montigny-le-Roi. But a branch road goes north up the well-tilled hillside until across the top of the plateau one sees the clustering trees beneath which the gardens and cottages of Champigny drowse through the summer days.

Around Champigny breathe traditions almost as venerable as those of Langres. Across the breezy upland fields, belonging to the commune, four Roman roads intersect and the

quantities of marble sculpture, pottery, and Roman coins which have been unearthed there are a measure of the density of Roman population which once dwelt in the vicinity and which was followed by the people of the Gallo-Roman period, in every way less cultured than their predecessors as attested by the massive, but comparatively crude, stone sarcophagi in which they buried their dead, numbers of which have been discovered near Champigny. In the incessant wars of the seventeenth century, Champigny like most of the villages of northeastern France, suffered keenly and it was burnt to the ground in 1639 by Croats in the employ of Charles IV, Duke of Lorraine. His pillaging troops went back to Germany that autumn "with more cattle than soldiers and purses full," both cattle and money, of course, having been stolen from the inhabitants of invaded France. The people of Champigny, indeed, were reduced to such straits during these years that a historian of the Haute-Marne, M. Carnandet, declares that they were forced "to yoke themselves to their own ploughs, having neither cattle nor horses to work."

The peaceful village of today gives little evidence of such periods of anguish and its square church tower surmounting a low cruciform church looks out above the dense evergreens which surround it across as placid a countryside as can be met with anywhere. Beneath the dense shade of these evergreens at the side of the church one will find on warm summer afternoons a group of the village women seated comfortably with their sewing and mending, watching with contented curiosity the occasional wagon or automobile which disturbs the quiet of the deserted street. Cottages with well-trimmed vines hanging over doors and windows define this street until it runs out again into the country road which, after crossing a deep ravine, wanders on back to the valley of the Marne

and shortly into the next village on the right bank, Jorquenay.

The length of Jorquenay's main street lies strung like a necklace along a curving bend of the canal, in whose still, blue bosom the gray old houses and the hillside behind, green and purple with waving alfalfa, and the church halfway up the slope, are reflected as in a mirror. The church, of course, has its history, the choir of the structure dating from the thirteenth century while within the quiet interior is an archaic statue of the Virgin and Child which was wrought in the same epoch.

Humes, the next village down river, is reached by crossing the Marne and the canal at Jorquenay, the country road re-entering the Langres-Chaumont National highway before the latter comes into the long main street of the village. Humes was a busy place in 1918, for not only was it a billet and barracks town for American troops of the Seventh Training Area and the seat of Camp Hospital 7, but it lay beside the wide, well-paved road between American General Headquarters at Chaumont and the Army Schools at Langres, a road whose wayside trees were usually white with the dust thrown up by passing convoys of trucks or hurrying automobiles. To the parched throat of many a doughboy and truck driver the *brasserie de Humes,* conspicuously located beside the street, contributed an innocent, but soothing, brown liquid whose flavor improved materially some months after the armistice but which, at all times, gave the village among the Americans in the vicinity of Langres a distinction otherwise unwarranted by its size.

Humes is, in fact, much smaller than the next village of any consequence northward along the road to Chaumont, this being Rolampont, the largest place lying between the two cities of the upper Haute-Marne. Rolampont lies on both

banks of the Marne, whose stream is steadily growing larger from the addition of rivulets coming down from the woodlands back among the hills. The very name of Rolampont has in it the breath of romance, for tradition says that it was originally "Roland Pont" or Roland's Bridge, although no other fragment of legend connects the locality with Charlemagne's redoubtable paladin. The bridge now spanning the river is one of those solid, graceful stone structures so usual in France, whose well-proportioned arches frame charming vistas of rounded trees bending above the river's edge and long red tile roofs reflected in the rippled waters.

A road running off northeast comes, just beyond the edge of that part of the village which lies east of the river, to broad fields of grain and alfalfa which sweep up and away in velvety slopes to the high, rounded summit of a great hill fringed with forest trees between whose branches can be caught glimpses of the grim walls of Fort de St. Menge, one of the far outlying defenses of the Langres *enceinte*. In centuries long past a Roman fort crowned this hill, guarding the roads from Langres to Nasium, near Bar-le-Duc. Legend says that in Roman times more than one battle was fought in this vicinity between the soldiers of the empire and the barbarians from beyond the Rhine, and the peasants of the neighborhood cherish a superstition that if one walks abroad on some nights in these upland fields about the hill of Fort de St. Menge he will see at certain hours in the light of the moon shadowy warriors on horseback, headless but clad all in armor and with horses barbed and richly caparisoned.

Rolampont itself seems to have been for ages the site of a bridge and a point of some importance on the medieval highways. The little knoll on the west side of the river now occupied by the church was formerly the site of a château

fort now totally vanished. It was doubtless in this building that King Charles IX had his lodging when, in the seventeenth century, he sojourned at Rolampont and left on record his admiration for the place in the phrase, "the beautiful village." King Stanislaus I of Poland likewise once visited there, resting at the presbytery, while the erudite Jesuit, Delecey de Changey, author of the *Lanterne Encyclopedique,* retired to the sylvan quiet of Rolampont for the pursuit of his literary labors.

In February, 1918, the village was the headquarters of the Forty-second American Division, the "Rainbow," and the billeting place of the One hundred and Sixty-eighth Infantry regiment of that division. Probably in the chill, foggy days of winter it did not seem very attractive to the Iowa boys, but in summer it certainly still justifies King Charles' phrase, for it is a pretty spot between the wooded hills on either hand with the Marne whispering along the edges of the garden walls and beneath the shade of bordering orchards. The church, hidden deep among old trees, is of no great interest historically despite its massive Romanesque interior where six huge square columns bear up the groined roof of nave and transept.

Close beside the church stands the village school, a large stone building but not, apparently, any too large for the accommodation of the many youngsters, both boys and girls, who swarm out of it at the end of the day's session. In Rolampont no more than in most other rural communities is there any evidence of the "race suicide" in France of which so much has been written. In such communities the children seem as numerous as in other countries and certainly very attractive children they are; healthy, active, very often good looking and nearly always neatly dressed, while

The very name of Rolampont has in it the breath of romance

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their uniform politeness and good breeding are something to make other nations envious. It is easy to believe that the American soldiers who, during the war and for six months thereafter, thronged Rolampont and scores of other villages of its type in northeastern France, found life in these out-of-the-way places rendered more endurable by the presence of the children and that many a doughboy when he departed on his long trail toward the sunset, left behind him small friends, the thought of whom will sweeten recollections of France through all future years.

Undoubtedly to the children themselves the presence of these stalwart Americans was, in general, a broadening experience. It is altogether probable that before the war an American had never been seen in Rolampont, for this section of France was far removed from the beaten paths of tourists. To be sure, everywhere in France the younger generation learned in school something of the former French colonies in America and a good deal about the American Revolution. They knew and revered the names of their fellow-countryman, Lafayette, of Benjamin Franklin and particularly that of George Washington, and when they visited Paris, as everyone in France does, sooner or later, they found there streets named for these men, and statues of them and other Americans in the public places and probably took an especially lively interest in the fine equestrian statue of Washington, in the central court of the Palace of the Louvre, which was presented to France by the school children of America.

Yet such knowledge, though impressive, still left America and Americans rather vague and unreal. And then suddenly there appeared among them, almost overnight, hundreds, thousands, a perfect deluge of Americans, bringing the very substance of the shadowy New World into the midst of the

drowsy corners of olden France. Young, robust, bubbling over with good spirits, full of startling new ways of doing things, knocking together big, ugly frame barracks and stables and shops and "Y" huts in the most unexpected places, pushing themselves with insatiable inquisitiveness into every nook and corner, often irreverent of all the ancient things about them, but always frankly curious concerning them, immediately making friends or enemies of everybody in the countryside, spending money like princes, drinking all the liquor, mild or powerful, accumulated in the neighborhood and filling village streets and country roads with the clatter and dust of trucks and buzzing motorcycles and the songs and profanity and laughter and banter of the land that lay the other side of Miss Liberty, they fairly submerged the country in olive drab and took possession of it.

Some of the French youngsters, no doubt, chumming with these fascinating new arrivals, as they very promptly did, on the streets and in the shops and dooryards and simple village homes, fell in with the bad specimens of young American manhood who, fortunately, were in a decided minority among our troops, and learned more evil than good of America. But the most of them, we may believe, were broadened and bettered by that association and as they grow older will be able to recall those noisy, big-hearted visitors of a few months among them with the affection and something of the understanding which are the bed-rock basis of lasting international sympathy and friendliness. An evidence of this sentiment is the almost reverential care with which the children, as well as the older people, of Rolampont and every other American billet village along the Marne, guard the weather-beaten wooden signs left by the Americans on house doors and street corners; signs whose fading stenciled legends announce,

"Town Major," "Headquarters —— Infantry," "Do not drink this water. For washing only," etc. The sentiment which will preserve such poor relics is written on the hearts entertaining it so deeply that it will long outlive the relics themselves.

The sharply eroded valley of the Marne presents many changing aspects of quiet beauty as one follows the shady road on past Vesaignes and Marnay, the latter with a pure Gothic church, to the railway junction of Foulain, whence a branch line of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est winds off up the valley of the Traire River to Nogent-en-Bassigny, a manufacturing town noted for its cutlery. It will also be remembered by a host of Americans as the seat of the Advance Section, Services of Supply, until October, 1918, and after that as the headquarters of the Fifth Army Corps, under Major General Charles P. Summerall.

The narrow gauge branch line from Foulain is hidden almost like a forest trail in the narrow valley of the small watercourse and its first station, Poulangy, is unseen until one is almost upon it. It is itself the site of several factories but they have not spoiled the rustic appearance of its clambering streets, nor detracted from the freshness of the steep hillside behind it which, in August, is rich with tiny sweet wild strawberries growing sheltered from the sun beneath a profusion of leaves. There formerly existed at Poulangy an abbey for women established by the Abbess Ste. Salaberge before the year 688 and successively presided over in the early part of the twelfth century by the Abbesses Ste. Adeline and Ste. Asceline, the nearest relatives of St. Bernard. Some quaint stories are preserved concerning the administration of justice in Poulangy in earlier days. It is related, for instance, that on one occasion a local official caused a sow to be legally executed

for having killed an infant. At another time when a man whose life was valued by the villagers had, nevertheless, been condemned to death for some crime, real or alleged, the difficulty was solved very simply by executing him with all legal solemnity—in effigy.

Beyond Foulain a long bend of the Marne and the ever-accompanying canal beside it embraces the scattered dwellings of Luzy and alike the more compact group of Verbiesles. From the broad Marne bridges leading over to them, the two villages show little more than their red roofs and the spires of their churches above the billowed green of roadside trees and orchards. On the west side of the river are great hillsides densely clothed with the forests of the Bois Millet and the Bois de la Vendue which were the scene, in 1918, of some of the extensive work of the American Forestry Department Engineers, whose cozy home "lumbering camp" was at Luzy, a very different center of operations from the log shacks of the Wisconsin or the Oregon woods. These hillsides rise almost sheer from the river, forming the eastern wall of the narrow watershed between the valleys of the Marne and the Suize, of which the latter, rising southwest of Langres, nearly parallels the Marne at a distance of a few kilometers all the way to Chaumont.

The village church of Luzy is a charming example of thirteenth-century architecture with a Romanesque altar. It was for a long time in olden days a place of pilgrimage because it contains the relics of St. Evrard, the patron of the village. He was a hermit of the ninth century whose place of solitude was the long-since vanished Priory of Moiran, in the old forest adjacent to Luzy. The château of Luzy which, except for traces of the deep moats, disappeared centuries ago as completely as St. Evrard's retreat, was built

by a Bishop of Langres and held under him at one time in the fourteenth century by one Charles d'Escars, Baron of Luzy. It must have been a noble structure in its day for its walls were flanked by nine towers.

The ancient, but unimportant, annals of Verbiesles also run back for nearly a thousand years but its chief claim to a place in the history of France is the fact that within its communal precincts lie the château and park of Val-des-Écoliers. That claim applies as well to American history for it did not arise until the early summer of 1918, when the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, General John J. Pershing, took this lovely and storied estate, four kilometers southeast of Chaumont, as his place of residence, continuing to occupy it for more than a year, until the American General Headquarters at Chaumont was closed in July, 1919.

If one first approaches the Château du Val-des-Écoliers from the Langres-Chaumont highroad it is disclosed to him as he swings around a high shoulder of hill, the white walls and mansard roof of the château gleaming between the graceful trees which dot the broad park all around it. In this portion of its course the valley of the Marne has spread to a greater amplitude. Beyond the château, the river and the blue canal, their waters peeping here and there between the marching rows of poplars, clasp the emerald lawns of the park, while still beyond its acres stretch the sunlit meadows, dotted in midsummer with fragrant cocks of hay which men and girls with broad-tined forks, like figures out of a Millet painting, are pitching up into the racks of great two-wheeled carts. Off over the meadows, sheer above the poplar trees skirting the river and the canal, stand the semicircular cliffs of the Côte Bault which rise above Chamarandes and beyond

them, wind-swept uplands of wheat and alfalfa interspersed with stretches of woods, with the low-spreading barracks of Hanlin Field, the American Gas Defense School, against the horizon to the northeast and the roofs and spires of Chaumont rising out of billows of treetops to the north. It is a scene of rustic loveliness and peace whose equal is seldom to be seen in any land.

As one descends by winding driveways into the cool shadows of the park, he is inclined to think less of soldiers and the clamor of war than of the sober monks who first inhabited this quiet spot and he half expects to see, pacing beneath the trees, some of the black-gowned figures who, long ago, made this a place of repute throughout France. For this religious house was founded in 1211 under the discipline of the Order of St. Augustine, as a retreat for study and a foundation of learning by four doctors of the University of Paris. In the course of time it became famous by reason of the treasures of art and science which were gradually accumulated within its handsome buildings. Several of its abbots were men of scholarly distinction in their day and the house rested in 1637 under the control of the brotherhood of the Church of St. Geneviève of Paris.

But the religious orders have been gone from the Val-des-Écoliers for many decades past and although an ancient round stone tower, completely cloaked in glistening ivy, stands near one end of the château as a reminder of the former monastic buildings, the château itself is a much more modern structure. It was designed by Jean-Baptiste Bouchardon, the distinguished architect and sculptor of Chaumont who did much to beautify the buildings of that city during the latter half of the seventeenth century. The château, both within and without, is a fine example of the dignified and

spacious architecture of the period of Louis XIV and among its elegant furnishings are many priceless souvenirs of the ancient days of the Val-des-Écoliers.

It was to this restful and homelike retreat, whose very atmosphere seems to have acquired through the centuries a quality of calm in which petty and transitory things are reduced to their true proportions, leaving the mind strengthened for the solution of greater problems, that the American Commander-in-Chief was wont to come from the busy General Headquarters' offices in Damremont Barracks, or from still more strenuous days spent near the front of his fighting divisions in the Marne, or the Vesle sectors, the St. Mihiel Salient, or among the shell-torn hills of the Meuse-Argonne. In the summer or autumn of 1918, if one passed in the twilight on the highroad leading down from Chaumont an olive-drab limousine speeding southward, with a red oblong bearing four white stars on the windshield and the tall, rigid figure of a man sitting bolt upright in its rear seat, one could hope that the "C-in-C" was going to have, at last, a good night's rest at the Château du Val-des-Écoliers. But that was by no means certain for often there were high officers of the Allied armies, American, French, or British, gathered for lengthy conferences at the château. Or, again, the American chieftain might be leaving in the small hours of the morning for a drive of 60 or 70 miles to some point close behind the battle front, or a still longer drive to General Pétain's headquarters at Provins or those of Marshal Foch at Senlis.

After the armistice, when the distinguished personages of the Allied countries, military, political, and diplomatic, found time for making the social acquaintance with one another which had been denied them in the feverishly active days of the war, General Pershing's residence frequently became

the scene of house-parties among whose members were men famous the world over. At different times there were entertained there President and Mrs. Wilson, President and Madame Poincaré, King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, Premier Clémenceau, Marshal Foch, Marshal Haig, the Prince of Wales, Mr. Baker, American Secretary of War, and Marshal Pétain. In short, during the eventful year in which it was occupied by General Pershing, the Château du Val-des-Écoliers earned for itself a place in our history which will doubtless cause it to be known in future beside the old farmhouse overlooking the Schuylkill River which was Washington's headquarters at Valley Forge and the little Leister House on the Taneytown Road whence General Meade directed the Army of the Potomac in the battle of Gettysburg.

Excepting for the double row of trees bordering the broad highway itself, the road to Chaumont, after climbing up from the river in the Val-des-Écoliers, follows the crest of a plateau which is open to the sun and wind. To its left lies the narrow valley of the Suize, intimately charming with its little fields and meadows bounded on one side by the wooded hills and on the other by the circuitous course of the small stream, now gliding furtively between beds of water grass and reeds and rows of bushy basket poplars and again tumbling gaily over a small dam as it pursues its way to its union with the Marne just north of Chaumont. To its right lies the broader valley of the Marne itself, with the red roofs of Chamarandes and Choignes glistening between the trees and here and there a factory chimney rising above them.

Skirting the widespread brick barracks of the Quartier d'Artillerie, turned over to the Americans and occupied during the war by Roosevelt Base Hospital 15, the country road begins to assume the character of a street as it passes the

Damremont Barracks, Chaumont, American General Headquarters

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Champ de Mars and the Château Gloriette, Chaumont

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Octroi (town tollhouse) and the outlying cafés and houses of the Faubourg des Langres and then, swinging into the Avenue de la Republique, crosses the street-wide bridge over the railroad tracks, with the leafy promenades of the Boulevard Thiers reaching away on either hand, and finds itself at last in Chaumont by way of the Rue de Chamarandes which leads directly, past the City Market and sundry shops and side streets, into the angular center of the city, scene of weekly markets and annual fairs, of public gatherings, and of historic ceremonies as well today as for almost countless generations past, the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville.

CHAPTER V

CHAUMONT-EN-BASSIGNY

THE etymologists disagree concerning the origin of the name, Chaumont, and in disagreeing they have arrived, as occurs frequently with both etymologists and doctors, at directly opposite conclusions. One group declares that it is derived from two Celtic words: *chad,* meaning wood and *mon,* meaning mountain; hence, wooded mountain. The other group avows that it is a corruption of the Latin, *calvus mons,* meaning bald mountain. One can take his choice but, at all events, Chaumont is not bald today for, excepting in the heart of the business streets, it is a riot of shady boulevards and parks and private gardens, from the scattered cottages of the southern suburbs right up to the bluff hill crest of Chaumont le Bois, 3 kilometers farther north where formerly old Fort Lambert thrust its frowning bastions out over the placid Marne, on the last promontory of the watershed between that river and the Suize.

Measured by Langres, Chaumont is a modern town for its recorded history dates only from the year 940, although it was mentioned once in earlier chronicles as the scene of the martyrdom of the Christian virgins, Aragone and Olivaria, who were murdered by Attila's Huns about the year 450. Both on the hill and in the adjacent valleys have been found the remains of Roman baths and Gallo-Roman tombs, household utensils, etc., some of which are preserved in the Museum of Chaumont. But the present town is entirely of feudal origin, having grown up around the château of the Counts of Champagne which stood on the great hill project-

ing like the prow of a ship from the western edge of the city into the valley of the Suize.

The territory upon which Chaumont stands belonged originally to the Counts of Bassigny and of Bologne. One of them, Geoffroy, was created the first Count of Champagne by Hugh Capet when that founder of the Capetian dynasty, in order to secure the greatest possible number of partisans, gave to his chief vassals as hereditary possessions the territories which they were guarding for the crown. This Geoffroy I of Champagne built the first massive parts of the château, which was greatly enlarged in later years and which came to be known as the Château Hautefeuille. It was not until the twelfth century that Chaumont itself began to assume any importance, after the people of the town in 1190 had revolted and extracted from their count, Henry II, a charter granting them certain privileges. A few years later another count, Thibaut IV, after having followed the good King Louis IX (St. Louis), on the Sixth Crusade, himself revolted and became the leader of a league against the royal authority. After a time he surrendered to the king and his late allies, in revenge, ravaged his territories and would have taken and pillaged Chaumont had a royal army not come to its rescue.

Although it escaped at that time, Chaumont in later years suffered frequently from the ravages both of armed foes and of the terrible plagues which often swept Europe in the Middle Ages. It was captured and sacked several times during those long decades of unspeakable wretchedness for France, the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). The revolting peasants of the "Jacquerie" took it in 1358 while engaged in their hopeless struggle against the cruel and oppressive nobility. Again about 1440 bands of brigands

called *écorcheurs* (flâyers) roamed at will over France and Belgium, killing cattle and stripping the clothes from their human victims. Some of them took Chaumont and for some time used it as a base of operations from which marauding expeditions went forth into the surrounding country, committing frightful excesses, strewing the roads with corpses and causing the villages to be abandoned and the farms to remain uncultivated until a famine resulted, followed by a pestilence which forced the outlaws to abandon the town. Another plague decimated the place in 1500, during the Religious Wars. Chaumont was a center of the Guises, leaders of the Catholic party, and it was attacked in 1523 by a German army of 12,000 men under the Count of Fürstenberg. He was, however, eventually driven from the siege and pursued across the Meuse by the army of the Count of Guise. This was but one incident of the Religious Wars, whose devastations caused the people extreme misery. In Chaumont their unhappy condition was aggravated in 1564 by the extravagant debts incurred by the city for the purpose of giving a magnificent reception to King Charles IX. The monarch visited Chaumont for some days and during his stay the streets were lavishly decorated, mystery plays were performed on stages in all the streets, banquets were given, and rich presents bestowed upon the king and his attendants.

In the midst of the Thirty Years' War the plague once more broke out in the villages around Chaumont. In vain were the city gates closed and the people forbidden under pain of death to venture forth; the plague entered and destroyed 2,300 victims during the ensuing nine months. The following years of the Thirty Years' War found Chaumont often crowded with French troops or those of her allies and

from some of these rough soldiers of fortune, the people suffered almost as much as from the enemy.

After the Peace of the Pyrenees had closed the Thirty Years' War in 1659, Chaumont at last settled into a tranquility which endured almost unbroken by noteworthy events, until the Revolution of 1789. Yet even during the preceding centuries, which constituted in every European nation a cycle of conflict and confusion while the peoples who were almost savages at the time of the dissolution of the Roman Empire were gradually building new foundations of government, religion, and culture, the condition of the people of Chaumont was by no means wretched always and in every respect. The dark side of the picture only has been presented thus far.

The political and commercial privileges granted to the city in 1190 by Count Henry II of Champagne were gradually increased in later years. After Chaumont, as a part of Champagne, became united to the crown in 1328, the royal bailiffs themselves generally gave to the inhabitants a just and, for the period, beneficent government. Such government, however, was still better assured in 1355 by the inauguration of elections at which the inhabitants chose their own local officials, while in 1604, King Henry IV finally granted to the city the privilege of being governed by a mayor and city council. The successive kings of France displayed a personal interest in Chaumont, mainly, it is true, because of its military strength. But this interest finally resulted in its thorough fortification, the work being begun under Louis XII and completed, between 1515 and 1559, under Francis I and Henry II. These fortifications existed until 1848 when they were leveled to make the broad boulevards which today encircle the inner city. They consisted of nine bastions con-

nected by tall ramparts and they were sufficiently strong to hold at bay all assailants who came before them during the two centuries following their completion.

A great measure of independence from the afflictions caused by the presence of alien soldiery was attained by Chaumont with the foundation, during the reign of Charles VII (1422-1461), of the companies of arbalesters, composed of young men of the community, similar to those at Langres already described. As was the case at Langres, these companies came to be not only a great safeguard to their native city, but a powerful weapon for overawing and finally for destroying the predatory nobility of the adjacent country. An armory called the Hôtel de l'Arquebus with which was connected a commodious garden or drill ground, was built for this militia in 1647, outside the ramparts on the ground now occupied by the large Trefousse glove factory on the Avenue des États-Unis, where it remained until 1852.

Through all their long generations the people of Chaumont have taken a deep and comforting interest in their religion and in the institutions and buildings in which religion has found tangible outward form and expression. The fact that through all the sectarian struggles which in different ages have agitated France, the vast majority of the Chaumontais adhered unswervingly to the Catholic faith probably contributed materially to the wealth and, particularly, to the standing of the various religious bodies whose buildings were dotted thickly through the town before the Revolution. A number of these buildings still remain, though altered to other uses. The beautiful Church of St. Jean-Baptiste, the most notable structure in the city, was begun in the twelfth century, but it was so long in reaching completion that parts of it exemplify also the styles of the fifteenth and sixteenth

centuries. The ancient Convent of the Ursulines, on the Rue Docteur Michel, was transformed after the Revolution into barracks for the *gendarmerie*. The present museum and art gallery was originally a Carmelite Monastery and then became the Prefecture of the Haute-Marne until the completion of the present more modern prefectural building.

The extensive mass of the Lycée, with its pleasant, tree-shaded courts, colonnaded porches, and lovely seventeenth-century chapel, was once a college of the Jesuits, while the ancient Capucin Convent has now become that place of amusement, so curiously antiquated and compressed to American eyes, the Municipal Theatre, hidden away on the alley-like Rue Felix Bablon. The large City Market now covers most of the ground occupied prior to the year 1800 by the churchyard and church of St. Michel, which, it used to be said "carried into the clouds the summit of its tall tower." On the Avenue Carnot, leading down Buxereuilles, the Hôpital Civile, whose slate-colored dome is conspicuous above the trees from every elevated point west of the city, was erected in 1765 by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul and it is still conducted by them,though during the war it was used by the French as a military, not a civil, hospital.

Far down in the bosky valley of the Marne, with the road to Neufchâteau on one side and the creeping waters of the river on the other, still stands St. Aignan's ancient chapel guarding the cemetery clustered about it. But the Chapel of Notre Dame, said to have been set quite as graciously in the valley of the Suize at Buxereuilles, has quite vanished, as have several other chapels within the former city walls. Today factories, stores, and offices occupy many of the places formerly held by the old religious houses while the streets, where once walked so many black- or white- or

gray-robed figures of the omnipresent orders, are filled with a crowd as modern and as preoccupied with the business and pleasures of the present as were the former denizens of these precincts with the problems of death and eternity.

CHAPTER VI

CHIEFLY FOR THOSE WHO "FOUGHT THE BATTLE OF CHAUMONT"

LEST he display too great a familiarity with the place to escape detection, it seems best to the writer to confess, before proceeding further with this rambling narrative, that a great part of his war-time and post war-time days in France were passed at Chaumont. That experience he shared in common with some thousands of other Americans, officers and soldiers, some of whom were "sentenced to Chaumont for the duration of the war" while others were there for short periods only and then departed for other centers of American activity, buzzing with the industry of the Services of Supply or trembling with the cannon roar of the front, as the case might be. Some of these warriors in olive drab liked Chaumont; others detested it. To some the narrow, crooked thoroughfares, the quaint old buildings, the tree branches bending out over high, secretive walls from jealously hidden gardens, the sudden vistas of far hills and red-roofed villages flashing upon the eyes of the wayfarer at turns in the outer streets where once the ramparts ran, the leisurely habits and unfamiliar business methods of the people, were all sources of interest, even of pleasure, because they spoke to the stranger the subtle language of antiquity and fired his imagination with the romance of a long and colorful past and a novel and piquant present. To others, all of these things were merely irritants, forcing constant unfavorable comparison with the fresh, efficient modernness of America and the energetic methods of its people.

But whether they liked Chaumont or whether they de-

tested it, one thing is certain — they can never forget it. In fact, it is safe to predict that they will remember it with increasing clearness, yes, and with increasing kindliness, as the years go by. For whether humble or conspicuous the part which he played in it, hardly a veteran of the World War will meet any future experience of peace-time which will stay with him as will those of the days when he was numbered among the host of America's Great Crusade, a soldier in the armies of civilization. Therefore let us go back to Chaumont, that nerve-center of the American Expeditionary Forces, as it was in 1918, and strolling about its crooked streets and shady purlieus, revisit some of the places which we knew then, throwing about them something of that distant past which only history can revivify, interwoven with something of the nearer past of which we were a part.

We may start, appropriately enough, at that busy little *gare,* with its two sugar-loaf roundhouses opposite the platforms, its long strings of passenger cars, *40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux,* and its assortment of locomotives varying from teakettles to real American Baldwins, where so many new arrivals at General Headquarters ran the gauntlet of red brassards appertaining to the Railway Transportation Officers. The Chaumont station does not bear a particularly historic appearance, but at least once, long years before the Americans began to swarm out upon its platforms, it witnessed an episode which was interesting, even though distressing. This was in 1870, when the troops of the French Fifth Army Corps, under General de Failly, having become isolated from the army of Marshal MacMahon after the battle of Worth, retreated from Bitche, north of Strassburg in Lorraine, across the Vosges Mountains and thence by Mirecourt and Montigny-le-Roi toward Chaumont, seeking by this hard and

The old Donjon garden, overlooking the valley of the Suize, Chaumont

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The Tour Hautefeuille and St. Jean's twin spires, Chaumont

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circuitous route to reach a railroad by which they might join the French reserve army at Châlons-sur-Marne. They succeeded, but when they reached Chaumont, exhausted, ragged, almost without food and utterly dispirited, they were the mere ghost of an army corps. For two days, observed by the Chaumontais with combined dismay and disgust, they thronged the Chaumont yards while embarking upon troop trains for the north. The last train to depart for Châlons had barely passed St. Dizier when Prussian uhlans cut the line at that point. De Failly's troops eventually rejoined Marshal MacMahon only to become involved, with the rest of that unfortunate commander's army, in the overwhelming disaster of Sedan.

Going out through the gates of the railway station with the crowd of French civilians, American doughboys weighted down with packs, Y. M. C. A. girls in fussy Ford ambulances, and officers in limousines bearing the red, white, and blue insignia of General Headquarters, we come immediately, in the square facing the station, upon the monument to the soldiers of the Haute-Marne who died for their country in the war of 1870. At the risk of offending some persons of highly developed artistic taste, the opinion is ventured that most doughboys thought this monument a pretty fine thing, with its high marble pedestal bearing aloft a dying French soldier and an officer, very much at bay, above whose heads an angel with outspread wings poises a laurel wreath. At all events, it thoroughly typifies the spirit of the memorial monuments of 1870 to be seen in nearly every city of France.

Behind an ornate gateway, facing one side of the monument, stands the sedate building of the Bank of France, resembling rather a residence than a business establishment, and across the square from it the little hostelry and restau-

rant generally known as the Hôtel Tourelle. Perhaps its outer café, where French poilus or civilians sipped wine or beer, and its inner dining-room where food as well as drink were served, was not familiar to many soldiers. But those who visited it occasionally found it much favored by "Y" workers of both sexes, who discreetly drank water despite the conspicuous enameled sign on the window: *Ici on consulte le Bottin,* which men in uniform usually interpreted, "Here one consults the bottle," rather than the guidebook advertised.

Across the Rue de la Tour Charton from the Hôtel Tourelle lie the cool, shaded pathways of the Square Philippe Lebon, with the statue of that kindly appearing inventor, a native of the Haute-Marne who introduced gas lighting into France, standing just within the gateway. The rustic *kiosque de musique* farther from the street and embowered in trees, was seldom used during the war, but in the afternoon or early evening one seldom failed to find a few American soldiers, off duty, playing ball with a bevy of French children on the lawns which stretch back toward the low wall and the close-cut hedges bordering the western edge of the park.

From the semicircular bay in that wall projecting farthest on the edge of the hill is to be seen one of the city's most attractive views. Below one's feet down the almost precipitous hillside are the chimney pots and tile roofs of the houses clinging to the sides of the Rue de l'Abattoir and the Rue des Tanneries; streets which drop down the narrow ravine from the now demolished Porte de l'Eau into the valley of the Suize. Hardly 300 feet distant across the ravine rises, from above the treetops, its equally precipitous opposite face, crowned by the rear walls of the residences facing on the Rue du Palais. Beyond and above them the twin spires of St. Jean-Baptiste prick the sky and at the extreme end of

the promontory the Palace of Justice, overtopped by the majestic bulk of the Tour Hautefeuille, crowns the dizzy escarpment of the old donjon, ivy cloaked from base to terrace. Far below the gentle Suize winds among the gardens and the scattered dwellings of the Faubourg des Tanneries and on through verdant meadows, while far away the blue hills of Bassigny roll off toward the setting sun.

Perhaps a soldier, smoking a cigarette and idly swinging his feet over the edge of the semicircular wall, remarks that the latter looks old. It is. The wall is the lower portion of the Charton Tower, one of the nine bastions of the city ramparts built, probably, about 1550 and cut down to its lower stage three hundred years later, when most of the fortifications were completely leveled. The donjon was another but much older bastion of the same *enceinte* and these two strong points by their cross fire protected the approach through the ravine to the former massive Porte de l'Eau at its head, where the streets leading up from the valley *faubourgs* entered the city ramparts. Though demolished, the medieval defenses have left their traces in some form nearly everywhere. The deep cut through which the railroad runs along the southern edge of the city was originally the moat of the walled town and on the east the broad Boulevard Gambetta and Boulevard Voltaire have found ample elbowroom because they were laid out on the whole space formerly occupied by the rampart and moat.

Returning to the Hôtel Tourelle one stands at the end of the Rue de Verdun, a street wider and more modern than most of the streets of the city and containing a number of the buildings, small, perhaps, but of the dignified, carefully chiseled stone construction characteristic of modern French architecture. But even here is to be seen at the rear corner

of the hotel, abutting on the gateway to the gray old courtyard known as the Cour de Champs, one of those curious, semicircular exterior turrets starting 7 or 8 feet above the ground and enclosing a spiral staircase, lighted by tiny windows and extending to all the floors above. The use of these space-saving adaptations of medieval fortress turrets seems to have been common in old Chaumont and many of them are to be seen there, particularly in the short streets near the Palace of Justice, constituting, because of their rarity elsewhere, one of the features which makes Chaumont notable among antiquarians.

The Rue de Verdun soon runs out into the little square with a drinking fountain in its center where this street meets the Rue Victor Mariotte, the Rue Felix Bablon and the Rue Toupot de Beveaux. The Rue Victor Mariotte, much favored as a short cut from the station by trucks, automobiles, and marching columns, climbs a steep grade past one of the two houses occupied for a time by the American Provost Marshal's office. This place, of rueful memory to many a luckless doughboy, shares its dubious honors with another in the Rue Laloy, near the Hôtel de Ville, where the Assistant Provost Marshal maintained his court of Nemesis in the earlier days of American occupation.

Upon the Rue Felix Bablon, as heretofore mentioned, is the boxlike entrance to that Theatre Municipal and erstwhile convent wherein were staged, at various times, moving international ceremonies, and such American soldier productions as the *G. H. Q. Revue,* first given here in December, 1918, for the benefit of the "Christmas Fund for the Kiddies of Chaumont." But much more often one saw at the Theatre Municipal those French plays and vaudeville performances of the "small town" variety, gazed upon admiringly from the

wooden benches of the pit by blue-coated poilus and their best girls, tolerantly from the red plush upholstery of the premier loges by family parties of Chaumontais, and disdainfully by groups of American officers sequestered between the high partitions of the boxes farther back. One does not forget, either, the discreet admonition of the management, presented on a neat placard beside the stage for the guidance of the public in case any performance should chance to meet with disapproval: "The audience is kindly requested to refrain from throwing anything on the stage."

The Rue Toupot de Beveaux, after passing sundry shops, among them the Libraire Jeanne d'Arc with its window cases displaying an odd collection of missals and breviaries, gilt saints, beads, and candlesticks intermixed with the latest novels and monographs on the war, comes in a moment to Chaumont's most pretentious hostelry, the Hôtel de France et des Postes. Leaving aside for a moment the enlisted men wise enough to cherish their francs and centimes, what officer who ever set foot in Chaumont escaped at least one meal at the Hôtel de France? Not that it was not a good meal, the potage savory, the viands tender, the salads crisp, and the *vins* above the average. But probably, afterward, if he were staying in the city, he borrowed some money and joined a mess, while, if he were merely passing through, he borrowed some money to take him on to his destination.

However, the expensiveness of the Hôtel de France must have been one of its appealing features to Americans, for at dinner time the big front dining-room and the more exclusive one farther back were always filled with Sam Brownes and it was seldom that the humble line officer could not whisper to his neighbor, in an awestruck voice, "See that big, fat guy over in the corner? That's Major General Umptytum,

commanding the ——th Division," or, "Don't you know that consumptive-looking shrimp with the tin pigeons jollying Madeleine over the other side of the coat rack? Why, man, that's Colonel Poohbah! He runs the whole works down at Back-sur-Back, delousing stations 'n'everything." Then, too, one always enjoyed the mild sensation caused among newcomers by the dramatic entry of "Petit Paul," that remarkable dwarf of three-foot stature with his armful of daily papers, his amazingly vibrant voice and his stock English phrase, "*New York Herald, Sheecago Treebune,* sair? Thank you, sair." Finally, it was pleasant, after dinner, to sip one's *café noir—fin,* if you preferred—in the shadows of the big courtyard or the tiny coffee-room behind the cashier's desk where one could talk English, real English, with Mademoiselle Alyce or her equally smiling and volatile sister and cousin. Under such circumstances it wasn't so bad even when, sometimes on moonlit nights, the siren whistle blew at the waterworks and the lights went out and one knew that somewhere up the line, 50 or 60 miles away, "Jerry was coming over" on one of his bombing raids and that around town some of the more timorous women and children of Chaumont were hustling for the "caves" and *abris.* Everybody knew that he wouldn't come there. It wasn't etiquette to bomb each other's General Headquarters and though Jerry violated most of the rules of etiquette during the war he never violated that one, at least not in the case of Chaumont.

Beyond the Hôtel de France, at the corner of the Rue de Chamarandes, was that other caravansary, the Hôtel du Centre, where, providing one were fortunate enough to find his way to the staircase through the mazes of the ground-floor café, he could reach a passable dining-room above where everybody ate at long tables and in a stony silence. It was

At Condes the Marne runs deep and still

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Rue Victor Mariotte, Chaumont

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Choignes with Chaumont in the distance

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Choignes on the Marne

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a good place "to chew the cud of thought," but if you craved a more lightsome atmosphere, imitative of Paris, you went to the Café de Foy, a few steps from the Hôtel de Ville, across the Rue de Chamarandes. Here there were an abundance of mirrors to reflect the electric lights, and a certain modest luster of glass and silver plate, especially on the little tables in the grilled recess at the rear end. Also occasionally there were some flashing eyes which could be looked into without too great difficulty.

Passing the market where once arose St. Michel's spire and crossing, once more, the bridge over the railroad tracks, one came, just beyond the boulevards, to the alleyway, festooned about at evening time by American and French soldiers, which lead back to the Cinema de Paris. There was good music here, especially from one maimed ex-soldier, who once conducted his own orchestra in Paris, and the pictures were generally worth looking at—that is, so much of them as could be seen through the clouds of tobacco smoke emitted by the Allied soldiery which always thronged the lower floor. Eastward beyond the cinema theater and the fire engine house, or *depot de pompes a incendie,* lay, on the Rue de Reservoir, that building of *bains et lavoir* where many a grimy warrior up from the ports or down from the front got his first thorough bath of many a day.

From the bridge over the tracks the shaded promenades and broad roadway of the Boulevard Thiers extend both east and west. If one walked eastward he came presently to a fork, the right hand roads leading him out past the city cemetery and suddenly into the open country, where from a steep, wooded hillside with pinetops sighing in the breeze, he looked across the lovely meadows of the Marne to the roofs and belfry of Choignes, sleeping at the feet of the great hills

beyond the river. The left-hand turn, on the contrary, led him still through the city, along the Boulevard Gambetta with its pleasant wayside benches beneath the trees. Here, on one side, stood the comfortable and hospitable hut of the French Officers' Club and, flanking the Normal School for Men, the row of pretentious mansions much favored for billets by American officers of the "order of the golden leaf" and upward. On the lower ground across the boulevard extended the tar-papered Adrian barracks of some units of French infantry, with the impressively large buildings of the Girls' High School and the Normal School for Women at the northern extremity of the block. Chaumont is well supplied with educational institutions, particularly in this quarter.

The French infantry barracks of war-time, mentioned above, occupied the ground of the Champ de Foire, normally left free for open-air fairs, circuses, and playgrounds for children, since it directly faces some of the oldest and most crowded streets of the city. Here even remain a few of the street names of pre-Revolutionary times and if one descend the Rue Voie Beugnot he will pass those mere slits between the walls of opposite houses called, respectively, the Rue du Vinaigrier (street of the vinegar factory) and the Rue du Pain Perdu (street of the lost bread). Decent enough within seem most of the houses abutting on these ancient alleyways but the children dwelling therein certainly have need of the nearby Champ de Foire for their daily fresh air and sunshine.

A few steps more bring the wayfarer to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. How many recollections may crowd upon the American as he stands on the flat cobblestones of the Place and looks down the principal street of Chaumont, now the Rue Victoire de la Marne, and up at the chaste façade

of that city hall, built in 1788 on the eve of the Revolution, with its three arched doorways supporting a colonnaded balcony and a gracefully carved pediment bearing the usual inscription, *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité, and* above that the face of the town clock and the domed bell tower surmounting all! There may come back to him that sultry afternoon of July 4, 1918, while France and England and America were waiting with bated breath for the next German drive somewhere along the Western Front, when the Place was jammed from wall to wall of the surrounding shops with a throng of French and American soldiers, civilians, women, and children, fervently celebrating the anniversary of America's Independence Day. Again he can see the rigid ranks of our Marines in forest green and French infantry in horizon blue, guarding the narrow passageway up to the steps of the Hôtel de Ville left clear for the distinguished guests. Then he sees General Pershing, General Ragneau, and General Wirbel, amid the wild applause of the crowd, striding up that pathway behind the slender, flashing bayonets of the French guard of honor and watches them appear on the balcony above, framed about by billows of red, white, and blue bunting intermingled with the Tricolor and the Stars and Stripes. He may not remember the more or less eloquent speeches but he will not forget the tall, rigid form of America's chieftain unbending to receive the great bouquet presented to him by a little French boy on behalf of the grateful children of Chaumont, nor the flashing smile which lighted that chieftain's face, usually so set and drawn during those anxious days, as he lifted to the balcony railing the laughing little daughter of Chaumont's mayor, Commandant Levy-Alphandery, and looked with her down upon the cheering throng below.

Or, again, he may recall the foggy morning of the following Christmas Day when, with colder air outside but warmer and infinitely more joyous hearts within, another crowd gathered in that same Place to welcome President and Mrs. Wilson as they, accompanied by General Pershing and a group of distinguished French and American officers, ascended the steps of the Hôtel de Ville for the reception tendered them by the city. Hedged about with the simple, hearty spirit of a family gathering and all the kindliness of the season seemed that Christmas morning in Chaumont as the townsfolk looked upon the chief executive of the great nation which had shared with them the burdens of the war and the joy of its recent overwhelming triumph, and in their happy faces they showed that they welcomed him in their hearts as sincerely as in their public places.

Nor would the soldier, standing in the Place, forget the little stands and booths and carts which on certain days of the week in ordinary times ranged themselves as if by magic over the flat cobbles, draped with bright bands and streamers of ribbon and tissue paper and filled with every sort of knickknack, from cheap jewelry and toilet articles to candy and fruit and lacework, while about them buzzed a crowd of women and children, always artlessly interested and always buying.

But the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville had witnessed many a stirring and tragic and merry scene long years and centuries before the feet of American soldiers found their way thither. Thus it was that on the afternoon of January 4, 1814, the townspeople, in response to the beating of the drums through the streets, gathered in anxious haste to hear the Commissary of Police announce from the balcony that the invading armies of Germany, Russia, and Austria, 350,000 strong, had crossed

the frontiers of France and that a part of the army of the Prince of Schwarzenberg was advancing on Chaumont. The commissary, by order of the emperor, proclaimed the levy in mass, but the people, long since deprived of their arms by the suspicious Imperial government, willing though they were, found themselves helpless to respond to the appeal to their patriotism and returned dejectedly to their homes.

No defenders remained to them save the few thousand stout veterans of the Old Guard under Marshal Mortier which were retiring sullenly before overwhelming numbers from Langres via Chaumont on Bar-sur-Aube. These devoted troops arrived and billeted in Chaumont, their advanced posts out on the road to Nogent and Bourbonne, their line of defense along the Marne guarding particularly the bridge at Choignes. On the afternoon of January 18, Schwarzenberg's forces reached the heights opposite and, deploying, attacked the crossings. They were repulsed but all through that cold winter night the battle continued, the French cannon thundering from the hills southeast of Chaumont in response to the enemy's bombardment, while the reserves of the Old Guard stood to arms in the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. At 3:00 o'clock on the morning of the nineteenth, while the anxious people gathered in the streets of the city watched the glow on the night sky from the burning buildings of Choignes, came word that the enemy had forced the passage of the Marne. Soon followed the order for the Guard to commence the retreat from the city and across the Suize by the Paris road.

At 8:00 o'clock the dejected citizens around the square heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs and a Würtemberg hussar rode up before the Hôtel de Ville and, calling for the mayor, demanded the surrender of the city and the immediate assignment of subsistence and billets for the Allied troops. For

eight days thereafter the hosts of the invaders poured through Chaumont, taking whatever they wished of private property, treating the inhabitants with great harshness, and ruthlessly pillaging the surrounding country. At the end of January the Emperor Alexander I of Russia, King Frederick William of Prussia, and Emperor Francis I of Austria passed through the city on their way, so they thought, to Paris. But the unexpected defeats of the hosts of Blücher and Schwarzenberg by the desperate French Army, inspired by the genius of Napoleon, sent this trio of "warrior monarchs," toward the end of February, scuttling incontinently back to Chaumont where, through the brains of their ministers, they presently evolved the noted Treaty of Chaumont, designed to rivet upon Europe in perpetuity the divine right of kings and to thrust France into the dust of humiliation chiefly because of her revolt against absolutism.

Turning back, again, the pages of history, this time for more than three hundred years to the days when "la Place" was surrounded, not as it is today by stores dispensing jewelry, electric supplies, books, music, millinery, etc., but by the gabled houses and dimly lighted tenements and shops of the Middle Ages, we may imagine it as it looked when it was the culminating center of the curious religious festivities known as *"la Diablerie de Chaumont."* These observances grew up gradually after 1475, in which year Pope Sixtus IV granted to the church of St. Jean-Baptiste de Chaumont a plenary indulgence called *"le Grand Pardon de Chaumont"* under which absolution could be granted to all penitents coming to the church on the festival of St. John the Baptist when that saint's day fell on a Sunday. Great numbers of pilgrims were attracted to the city from distant parts by this easy method of obtaining spiritual pardon for any sin in the deca-

logue, or out of it, and their presence naturally proved a great stimulus to business in the city.

Thus, to hold the crowds, added attractions were introduced and gradually developed, the chief ones taking the form of mystery and morality plays of a semireligious nature, such as were in vogue at about this period at various places on the Continent and in England. Some of these plays, as, for example, *Everyman,* have been revived of late years in somewhat modernized form and with marked success. Certain of the early favorites at Chaumont in which priests as well as laymen participated, were, *The Morality of the Banquet, The Sacrifice of Abraham,* and one, the most highly favored of all, presenting the mysteries of *Monsieur Sainct Jehan-Baptiste.* The several scenes of these plays were enacted on stages or wagons called "pageants," set up on different streets of the city, the climax occurring on the stage in the Grande Place.

But gradually the religious character of the presentations was lost, more and more vulgarity and buffoonery being introduced, while angels, saints, and even the Three Persons of the Trinity vied for attention with numerous devils, imps, and Saracens. In the final scene, the people crowding into the Place were regaled with the sight of a group of devils shooting a rocket from which, at a height of several hundred feet, there fell a puppet representing the soul of Herod, which was conducted by a wire so as to fall headlong into an immense basin of fire, the similitude of hell, about which the minions of Satan danced in fiendish delight. An improving sense of propriety on the part of the public finally compelled the discontinuance of *"la Diablerie"* in the year 1668.

Of the several streets leading out of the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, the Rue Victoire de la Marne, in ancient days the Rue de l'Etape, is easily the most frequented and it is lined with the

city's most pretentious shops as well as by a few monumental buildings. Animated, particularly in the long summer evenings, with crowds of promenaders, one saw here in the months following the armistice the gradual reblossoming of chic feminine fashions from the sober apparel of war-time, while a rapidly increasing array of men in civilian dress replaced the dwindling numbers of uniforms, French, American, British, and Italian, demobilized or departed for distant lands. Here were those tailoring establishments displaying in their show windows wasp-waisted olive-drab blouses, with touches of English swank in the bellows pockets and ample skirts, appealing, so said army gossip, particularly to American aviators. Here were the lingerie and embroidery shops with filmy laces, gaily embroidered handkerchiefs, and wonderful cushion covers decorated with roses or French and American flags and bearing the legend *Souvenir de la Guerre,* laid out to attract the eye of the Yankee lad, ever keen for just such souvenirs for "the only girl" back in the States. Here were the post-office and several of the banks and that cozy café whose little tables, half hidden behind a row of dwarf cedars set in big green boxes, was much affected by both officers and soldiers after the toils of the day were over. And almost opposite to it was the imposing Lycée, part of it temporarily alienated to the use of a French military hospital and part to the American post school.

Because the chapel of the Lycée was closed during the war perhaps not many Americans took the trouble to seek out the *concierge* for the purpose of gaining access to it. But it was well worth the effort of a visit, for its interior is a perfect example of seventeenth-century architecture. Its dazzling expanses of carved white marble in walls and columns and vaulted roof display a combination of Greek and Renaissance

forms in a rich profusion almost overpowering to the beholder. The beautiful altar screen with its bas-reliefs in gilded stone is from the hand of Jean-Baptiste Bouchardon, the distinguished seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century sculptor and architect of Chaumont, whose sons, Edme and Philippe, attained to even greater fame than their father.

The most notable work of the elder Bouchardon is in St. Jean's Church in Chaumont. His son Philippe emigrated to Sweden, where he designed the medals of the Swedish kings. Edme, the greatest of them all, was born at Chaumont in 1698 and died in 1762. He passed some time at Rome, where he made the busts of Pope Clement XII and of Cardinal de Rohan and Cardinal de Polignac. Going to Paris, he came under the patronage of Louis XV and executed the magnificent monumental fountain in the Rue de Grenelle representing the City of Paris seated between the god of the Seine and the goddess of the Marne; the Fountain of Neptune in the Gardens of Versailles, the Cupid, and the Temple of Love in the same Gardens and many other works. A few feet to the right of the entrance to the Lycée, in Chaumont, on the Rue Victoire de la Marne, everyone who has been in the city will recall the fountain dedicated to Edme Bouchardon, with its handsome entablature borne up by two Corinthian columns and sheltering a bust of the sculptor on a pedestal at the base of which a river nymph, couched among reeds, holds the pitcher from which the fountain flows.

Farther along the main thoroughfare as it curves gradually to the left toward the Boulingrin Park, are some fine old *tourelle* stairways and one also passes, on the right, the entrance to another street still bearing its curious medieval name—*Rue Cour du Trois Rois* (Street of the Court of the Three Kings). Almost opposite to it is the Museum, a build-

ing massively constructed though not of great size, which, as heretofore mentioned, was originally built as a Carmelite convent. Besides the collections of the Museum, it houses a public library of about 40,000 volumes and a priceless group of about 150 illuminated parchment volumes, the work of monks of the Middle Ages, most of them resident in or around Chaumont, the most valuable being those from the Abbey of Val-des-Écoliers.

On the days of the week when the Museum was open a few American soldiers were generally to be seen among the visitors in its galleries of paintings and the halls of statuary and antiquities. Though it possesses a number of modern paintings, a finely preserved "Head of Christ," by Albrecht Dürer is its most notable canvas while, in addition to copies of Greek and Roman masterpieces of statuary, the "Adam and Eve" of Jules Étex is remarkable. The collection of Roman and Gallo-Roman antiquities excavated in northeastern France and of sculptures preserved from medieval churches, includes some excellent stone sarcophagi and the statue of Jean de Chateauvillain from his tomb. In the summer of 1918 there stood in the pleasantly shaded courtyard of the Museum, abutting on the street, a contribution from the American Forestry Engineers then working in the Forest of Corgebin, 6 or 7 kilometers southwest of Chaumont. In digging a well in this venerable woodland, which more than seven hundred years ago belonged to the Order of the Knights of Malta who had a château in its borders, the Americans unearthed a handsome Roman pedestal upon which, evidently, a statue once stood in the grounds of the long-since vanished summer villa of some aristocratic Roman. The pedestal was turned over by its New World discoverers to the Chaumont Museum, where it is now preserved.

Crossing, from the Museum, the broad esplanade of the Avenue Carnot one passes the Prefecture, a stately stone building of two stories surmounted by a mansard roof and separated from the street by one of those graceful iron railings with elaborately wrought gates so frequently seen in French cities, and enters the shady, winding pathways of the Boulingrin — a name which is merely the French version of the English term "bowling green." The breadth of open street before the Prefecture is accounted for by the fact that it covers the ground formerly occupied by the towers, the portcullis, the drawbridge, and the moat of the Porte de Buxereuilles and, a little farther to the east, the still wider space where stood the Bastion de Bracancourt.

Never even by daylight, much less in the evening, did the secluded benches of the Boulingrin fail of occupancy by a certain number of swains in olive drab, earnestly endeavoring in doughboy French to express to the dark-haired Chaumont damsels by their sides the depth and fervor of their emotions, while these damsels as earnestly endeavored to comprehend and respond. The very atmosphere of the Boulingrin tempted to love-making, for was there not before the eyes of the idler within its precincts that ornate fountain with its shapely bronze nymphs and chubby little cherubs above the dry basin, and that exquisite "Amour" of Bouchardon, replica of the one in the Temple of Love at Versailles, and the delicately modeled *Kiosque de musique* where of a Sunday afternoon, after the armistice, the American General Headquarters Band discoursed music for, apparently, the entire population of Chaumont and all the uniformed strangers within her gates? Even for those less fortunate than the amorous occupants of the benches, the Boulingrin was the pleasantest part of the long daily walk between town and General Head-

quarters, for nobody, it seemed, ever made that trip by automobile excepting second lieutenants and field officers above the grade of major.

Another and, to officers, still more important oasis on that caravan route so frequently beset by either dust or mud, was the Officers' "Y" Hut in the Place du Champ de Mars, just beyond the Boulingrin; the enlisted men had theirs, as jealously guarded from the encroachments of Sam Browne's, nearer to Headquarters on the Avenue des États-Unis. A homelike place, indeed, was that Officers' "Y," with its many snug little bedchambers for "casuals" and its pleasant dining-room with chintz curtains in the windows and the walls hung with American and French war loan posters and the wonderfully decorative pictures of the seashore, the mountains, and the Riviera issued by the Paris-Lyon-Mediterranée Railroad. The dining-room was buzzing every noon and night with a crowd of hungry patrons and every Friday evening it was cleared for the weekly dance—a democratic affair at which a lieutenant, if he had sufficient nerve, might, without danger of being sent to Blois, tag a general and take away from him a pretty nurse from the Base Hospital, or a "Y" girl from Jonchery—though it must be confessed that in such a case he ran an excellent chance of a very cool reception from the lady thus favored. But, best of all, was the big lounging-room with its bookcases and writing desks, its long tables heaped with periodicals, the pictures on its walls, and the comfortable chairs and settees which could, on winter evenings, be drawn up around the crackling cheer of the huge double fireplace. The world was by no means a bad place when one could snatch a few moments of leisure from work to spend at the Officers' "Y," especially if he passed part of the time in talk with some of those fine, clean-cut American

women, who were at all times to be found graciously presiding over the place and giving to it the last wholesome, satisfying touch of home. He would be a captious critic, indeed, who would venture the opinion that the "Y" ever "fell down" at the Officers' Hut in Chaumont.

Next door to the Officers' Hut, in the same Place du Champ de Mars, was the great "Y" Entertainment Hut, thronged to the doors more evenings than not in the winter of 1918-19 with soldier spectators for some of the division shows, boxing bouts, performances of the "Over There Theater League," lectures, etc., which provided a never-ending stream of entertainment during the months of impatient waiting to go home. Not to discriminate but merely to exemplify, here it was that on one evening Colonel George C. Marshall, Jr., aide-de-camp to General Pershing, delivered his powerful lecture on the conduct and operations of the American armies in Europe before a packed house which included the Commander-in-Chief and Mr. Secretary of War, Baker. There, on another evening in the presence of General Pershing and the Prince of Wales, the theatrical company of General Headquarters again put on the uproarious *G. H. Q. Revue,* which went with a bang from start to finish and so delighted the royal guest of honor as he sat, frequently convulsed with laughter, between the tall figures of General Pershing and General McAndrew, the American Chief of Staff, that probably the most unsparing critic of royalty in the crowded hut was obliged to admit that here was as unassuming and pink-cheeked and good-natured an English lad as could have been found in any British billet town between Dunkirk and Le Havre.

At another time, on December 24, 1918, the Entertainment Hut was the scene of that whole-souled "Merry Christmas

for the Kiddies of Chaumont," in which the American soldiers stationed there showed to their 2,000 small guests in a little play written by the present author and produced by Dorothy Donnelly, just how the day of good cheer is observed in the United States, and bestowed upon each youngster from beneath the boughs of a mighty Christmas tree whose upper branches, spangled with tinsel and colored lights, brushed the high ceiling, toys and bags of candy to gladden every childish heart, too many of which had long been deprived of such joys by the rigid economies of war-time.

Since the departure of America's hosts the Place du Champ de Mars, once so crowded with their flimsy temporary buildings, is denuded again. But its wide expanse is to be the site of the memorial monument to the American occupation of Chaumont, the structure being the joint fruit of appropriations by the municipal and departmental governments and of popular subscriptions from all the towns and villages of the Haute-Marne; an abiding evidence of the bond, never to be broken, binding Chaumont in sentiment with the Republic of the West.

The attractive Château Gloriette, General Pershing's residence during the autumn and winter of 1917-18 and, a year later, the hospitable home of the Y. W. C. A. workers in the Chaumont region, stands on the edge of the hill near the north end of the Champ de Mars and, opposite to it, the glove factory of Trefousse and Company, the largest of Chaumont's industrial plants, a great proportion of whose product has for many years been marketed in the leading stores of a number of American cities. By the gates of the glove factory begins the long avenue of trees with a broad promenade in the center and roadways on either side, formerly called the Avenue du Fort Lambert but now rechristened the Avenue

des États-Unis because it leads to the Caserne Damremont, the seat of the American General Headquarters.

Along this thoroughfare one often had the pleasure of seeing detachments of German prisoners of war "manicuring the roads" and keeping them in first-class order for the processions of trucks, automobiles, and pedestrians in uniform who were constantly hurrying back and forth along this main artery. The avenue passed the commodious "Y" Hut for enlisted men, which stood across the way from the barracks long occupied by a battalion of the Sixth Marines, the General Headquarters garage and that usually crowded motor transport park which, one morning late in May, 1918, to everyone's surprise, was utterly deserted because, as appeared later, the trucks had rushed north during the night loaded to capacity with small arms ammunition for the Second Division then just coming into line west of Château-Thierry for its immortal stand that stopped the Germans in their march toward Paris. Next to the motor transport park and across the street from the gateways of the caserne lay the long barracks of Camp Babcock, thoroughly concealed behind a high old wall, while farther down the tree-arched roadway came the French portion of the caserne, American fuel yards, carpenter and blacksmith shops, the Post Quartermaster's building, the local Gas Defense School and, finally, ever-smoldering incinerators out on the bluff point overlooking the meadows where the Suize joins the Marne; the point which in the thirties of the last century carried the ramparts of Fort Lambert at a time when the national government entertained an intention, later abandoned, of making Chaumont, as well as Langres, a fortress of the second line of defense against Germany on the northeastern frontier.

But it was by passing through the gateway into the great

quadrangle of the Caserne Damremont, shaded on three sides by well-trimmed trees, that one reached, literally, the heart of the American Expeditionary Forces. From the front line of the battle zones back to the farthest port, the vital functions of the American Army were controlled absolutely, in their larger aspects, from the three plain, four-story buildings which face the inner quadrangle on its western, its northern, and its southern sides. These barracks buildings were, before the American occupation, and continued to be after the American evacuation, the rendezvous of the One Hundred and Ninth Regiment of French Infantry and the caserne was named in honor of General Charles Marie Denis Damremont, a distinguished French commander during the conquest of Algeria in North Africa, who was killed at the head of his troops in the storming of the city of Constantine, Algeria, on October 12, 1837.

The circumstances which lead to the location of American General Headquarters in Damremont Barracks and, indeed, in Chaumont, were not altogether simple, for at first thought it would seem that any one of a number of cities in the same general region might have served as well. The decision of General Pershing to make the portion of the Western Front lying between the Argonne Forest and the Moselle River the scene of the future operations of the American armies, was reached very soon after his arrival in France in the summer of 1917. The choice of this front after conference with the other Allied high commanders and the selection of seaports and lines of railroad communication best suited to serve it, indicated the necessity of establishing the General Headquarters at some point in northeastern France within easy reach of the front and yet centrally located with relation to the lines of communication, the training areas for troops and the great supply

depots and manifold industrial plants which were to be developed for the use of the coming hosts of America.

Yet this point must have at once good road and rail connections with all the places mentioned, accommodations for very extensive offices, billeting and barrack facilities for a large number of officers and men and a location both healthful and physically attractive, so that no avoidable handicaps might operate to reduce the maximum efficiency of the selected men who would be gathered there, most of them because of proved capacity for some branch of general staff work. Some other cities possessed some of these requirements, but none save Chaumont possessed them all. It was approximately 60 miles from the selected American front and thus nearer than either the French or the British General Headquarters to their fronts, its railways and highways gave easy communication in every direction, its many comfortable houses, for it was a place of 16,000 people, offered ample and pleasant quarters for the personnel, its salubrious location in the beautiful upland country of the High Marne together with its many open spaces of boulevard and park, assured both health and contentment to those who would reside there, while, finally, the large and airy buildings of Damremont Barracks, situated on the high crest overlooking the lovely scenery of the river valleys and the uplands beyond, provided, ready-made, ideal quarters for the creation and expansion of the offices of a great staff organization. Thus upon Chaumont fell the choice and with the arrival there of the American Commander-in-Chief and his, as yet, small corps of assistants, early in September, 1917, began the most important epoch in Chaumont's long existence. In the course of a few months the various departments were settled and functioning in the quarters which they continued to occupy until July 15, 1919, when

General Headquarters departed from Chaumont to return to the United States.

The geometrical as well as the administrative center of G. H. Q., as General Headquarters was usually termed, was in "B" Building, the middle one facing the gateway, where on the second floor at the head of the main stairway was General Pershing's private office, flanked by those of his personal aides. The general's office was distinguished from most others merely by having a well-carpeted floor and some upholstered furniture, this unwonted luxury being amply justified by the fact that here the "C-in-C" constantly received and consulted with the most important personages in the military and civil life of the Allied nations. Opposite to the general's office on the other side of the hallway, which, like those in all the buildings, ran the full length of the structure with offices on both sides of it, were the offices of the Chief of Staff, first occupied by Major General James G. Harbord, before he departed to take command, first of the Marine Brigade and then of the Second Division during the Marne defensive and counter-offensive, and later to continue his distinguished service as Commanding General of the Services of Supply at Tours. General Harbord was succeeded at Chaumont by Major General James W. McAndrew who served with great ability as Chief of Staff throughout the rest of the war and until late in the spring of 1919, when Major-General Harbord for a brief period resumed the position. Next door to the Chief of Staff was the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, General Leroy Eltinge.

In the office of the Chief of Staff occurred the daily morning conferences between the Chief of Staff and the Assistant Chiefs of Staff of the "5 Gs," as the sections of the General Staff were familiarly called. At these conferences were dis-

cussed and decided the many momentous questions constantly arising with regard to the administration, movements, and supply of the American forces; the questions, that is, which involved action by more than one staff section, and those which were not decided without consultation by the Commander-in-Chief himself. The relation of the several sections to the general problems of the campaign will be better understood if the functions of each are briefly outlined, at the same time that their location in Damremont Barracks is recalled.

The First Section, which began work under the command of Colonel James A. Logan, who was succeeded by Brigadier General A. D. Andrews, had its offices on the lower floors in the left end of "A" Building, at the south of the quadrangle, where the walls of most of its rooms were decorated with a bewildering array of charts and "graphs," in black and white and variegated colors. The First Section supervized the organization and equipment of troops, ocean tonnage, and priority of shipments, replacements of men and animals, the Provost Marshal's service, the Military Welfare societies, etc., and prepared strength reports and the American order of battle.

The Fourth Section was at first headed by Colonel W. D. Conner who, going to command the Sixty-third Infantry Brigade, Thirty-second Division, was succeeded in May, 1918, by Brigadier General George Van Horn Moseley. This section was also housed in "A" Building, occupying a greater part of its right end. Among the activities of the Fourth Section were: the control of supply, construction, and transportation in France; supply and transportation arrangements for combat; hospitalization and evacuation of sick and wounded; assignment of labor and labor troops and assignment of new units arriving in France.

Finally, "A" Building contained on its upper floors the offices and the vast accumulations of papers of the Adjutant General of the American Expeditionary Forces, who was at first General Benjamin Alvord and later General Robert C. Davis. In the big document rooms of the Adjutant General's offices the maddening search through interminable filing cabinets for letters, file copies, originals, duplicates, which seemed always to be demanded unexpectedly and for instant delivery by every other office in General Headquarters, was relentlessly pursued from, approximately, daylight until dark by some 60 officers and 700 enlisted men. The Adjutant General's Printing Plant, which printed all General Orders and a multitude of other documents, was located on the first floor of "B" Building.

The largest and probably the most complex of the General Staff sections was the Second, or Intelligence, Section, whose offices occupied the left wing of "B" Building and ramified into "C" Building and into sundry temporary Adrians adjacent to the caserne. Throughout the war the Intelligence Section was in charge of General Dennis E. Nolan. Only once, to certain knowledge, did he take a vacation. That was during the battle of the Meuse-Argonne. He spent it pleasantly in commanding a brigade in the Twenty-eighth Division with which he captured the Heights of Châtel-Chéhéry, flanking the enemy out of the Argonne Forest and, incidentally, winning for himself the Distinguished Service Cross by leading a handful of tanks in an early morning counter-attack on the enemy in the valley of the Aire River. The Intelligence Section had charge of accumulating, classifying, and distributing all information concerning the enemy's troops and his military and economic resources; of the secret service and counter-espionage, of the censorship, the preparation and distribution

of maps, including the daily maps of the enemy order of battle, and the daily issue of a number of intelligence publications embracing the *Press Review,* the *Summary of Information* and the *Summary of Intelligence.* The section also had supervision of the greatest publication of all, the weekly *Stars and Stripes,* the official American Army newspaper, whose extensive offices of publication were in Paris.

Many of the Intelligence Section offices in "B" Building resembled in every particular the offices of a large daily American newspaper excepting that all the workers were in uniform. But probably the most interesting place of all was the Order of Battle Room, where day and night, officers stood before the huge maps of the Western Front which covered the walls, marking upon them by means of little oblong identification cards the location and movements of the enemy's divisions, as information concerning them came in constantly from the front or from the headquarters of other Allied armies, by our own wireless or interceptions of German wireless, by telephone or telegraph, airplanes, or special couriers. This data, together with all other important facts which were ascertained concerning the strength, condition, or intentions of the enemy's combat units were classified and sent daily to the headquarters of the American armies, corps, and divisions in line, in order to keep them constantly and accurately informed.

The lower floors in the right wing of "B" Building were occupied by G-3, the Operations Section, first commanded by Colonel John McAuley Palmer, who, on going to a command in the field, was succeeded by General Fox Conner. All the vital matters concerning the actual combat operations of our troops, strategic studies and plans, orders, artillery concentrations, and allotments of guns and ammunition, employment

of the air service, liaison within our own forces and between them and the Allied armies; movements, location, and composition of combat troops, reconnaissances, security, and information at the front, the issue of daily situation maps of our own forces and the collection and classification of reports of operations, were among the responsibilities of General Conner's section. As in G-2, maps were the most conspicuous feature of the furnishings of the Operations Section offices; maps contoured and hachured, printed, photographed, mimeographed, and hand-drawn, the chief difference appearing to be that in the Intelligence Section a majority of the maps seemed to cover the walls, where they could be contemplated, while in G-3 a majority covered tables and desks, where they could be pored over with pencil and dividers.

Up under the mansard roof of "B" Building were the quarters of the Fifth, or Training, Section, directed prior to February, 1918, by Colonel Paul B. Malone, who in that month went to the front to become the pugnacious commander, first, of the Twenty-third Infantry, Second Division, and then of the Tenth Infantry Brigade, Fifth Division. He was succeeded in charge of the Training Section by General Harold B. Fiske. General Fiske's section evolved the doctrine of instruction and training for the American Expeditionary Forces and controlled its application throughout the American training areas and schools. It was in general charge of the Army Schools at Langres and it prepared and issued all training manuals, conducted inspections to insure thoroughness of training throughout the army and, in consultation with the Operations Section, determined the organization and equipment of troops. In the winter of 1918-19 the Training Section, with the discontinuance of training for battle, inaugurated and supervised the huge programs of athletic contests

throughout the American Expeditionary Forces culminating in June and July, 1919, in the Inter-Allied Games at Pershing Stadium, Paris.

The five sections whose functions have just been outlined, with their hundreds of officers, enlisted men, and field clerks, constituted the General Staff organization proper of the American Expeditionary Forces. But there were, in addition, numerous administrative and technical services of the army which maintained their main offices or at least liaison offices at General Headquarters, many of them occupying rooms in "C" Building, at the north of the quadrangle, or in some of the smaller, adjacent buildings in the caserne. Among these were the main offices of the Inspector General and the Judge Advocate General of the American Expeditionary Forces and liaison offices of the Engineer Corps, the Medical Corps and the Signal Corps, the Air Service and the Ordinance Department, whose headquarters were at Tours. In "C" Building were likewise housed the Italian Mission to American General Headquarters, under General Perelli, and the Belgian Mission, under Colonel Tinant. The British Mission, whose chief was General C. M. Wagstaff, was located in the southern of two buildings at the main entrance to the caserne, while the French Mission, the largest of any of the foreign missions, under General Ragneau, had a commodious building of its own down town on the Rue Decres.

West, south, and east of Damremont Barracks, every available space was filled with the long Adrian barracks of American troops connected in one way or another with General Headquarters, and on the frequent occasions of ceremony or entertainment in the quadrangle, the show place *par excellence* for such functions, they could disgorge an impressive number of men in olive drab both as participants and as spec-

tators. When there occurred such an event as the bestowal upon General Pershing of the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor by President Poincaré, the parade ground would be surrounded by solid ranks of American and French troops, backed by a throng of spectators, both soldiers and townspeople, while the superb General Headquarters' Band, "General Pershing's Own," supported by some French regimental band, would discourse martial music, the bugle corps of the two organizations, in particular, vying with each other to produce the most amazing flourishes on their instruments. Many decorations of officers and soldiers by the American military authorities or by the representatives of Allied governments, took place in this spot, especially during the winter and spring of 1919. There at different times President Wilson, King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, Marshal Haig, and the Prince of Wales were formally welcomed to General Headquarters and there, on one winter afternoon, slender little Elsie Janis, quite alone, for more than an hour kept in an uproar of merriment a crowd which filled every foot of space within sound of her voice.

But the popular daily events, unless the weather was rainy, were Guard Mount, at 11:00 o'clock A. M. and the concert by the General Headquarters Band, from 12:30 to 1:30 P. M. Guard mount was always a finished and snappy performance while, at the hour of the concert, a large percentage of the headquarters personnel was always to be found, spending the few leisure moments following the noon meal, beneath the trees or around the covered band stand in front of "B" Building while the 85 or 90 musicians, selected as the best in the American Expeditionary Forces, rendered a musical program which no band in the United States could excel. From this same quadrangle, while the war continued, through all

the hours of darkness of winter or summer nights, lights could be seen twinkling around the edges of the black curtains in some of the windows of each barracks building, showing where work continued throughout the twenty-four hours.

This, in the briefest sort of outline, was General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, the center of the complex staff organization which for nearly two years controlled the destinies of an American army amounting, at its maximum, to over 2,125,000 men; an organization whose decisions and utterances were awaited eagerly during that time by the people of the United States and upon whose foresight, efficiency, and firmness, it may fairly be said, the destinies of the world for a time depended. As was in keeping with the power of America's effort and the magnitude of her army, the General Staff at Chaumont was the greatest and undoubtedly the most competent staff organization which our nation ever possessed. Furthermore, there is probably no officer or enlisted man who had the high privilege of serving with that organization for any length of time who would not acknowledge that in that group of regular and temporary officers, representing the highest degree of military, professional, and technical ability in the many lines requisite for the prosecution of modern warfare, were assembled the finest and most representative body of American gentlemen and men of affairs whom he ever saw gathered in one group of like size. Such groups are not drawn together by the ordinary affairs of life; only patriotism — the single desire to serve their native land to the exclusion of all else — could ever have assembled such a body, or can ever again assemble such another.

Retracing our steps from Damremont Barracks down the Avenue des États-Unis, over whose broad, cindered promenade the sunlight, sifting through the trees, weaves a pattern

of moving leaves, and turning to the right past the Museum, one comes, at the next corner, to the Rue Bouchardon. Its curving length of cobbles arrives, after a few hundred feet, at a high stone entrance opening upon a wide stairway. Mounting this stairway to the second floor, past a stained-glass window depicting the signing of the Treaty of Chaumont on March 1, 1814, one enters the rooms of the Cercle Militaire des Armées Alliées: the Inter-Allied Military Club. Before the American occupation these pleasant quarters were devoted to the use of the French officers of the One Hundred and Ninth Infantry and others on duty in Chaumont, but they threw the doors wide to their brother officers of the Allied armies and in 1918 and 1919 the place was much more frequented by Americans than by French. Two card-rooms, a small bar, and a big, quiet reading- and writing-room, its massive center table furnished with a good selection of current periodicals French, English, and American; this was the extent of the Military Club. The deep leather chairs of the reading room and the crackling fire burning in the fireplace, handsomely carved above, rendered the place a favorite resort for those desirous of a quiet hour, especially in the evenings of winter when most billets, however comfortable in other respects, were apt to be as cold as sepulchers. To those more convivially inclined, the card-rooms offered an atmosphere of greater congeniality where among the devotees of the varied sports of the green-felt-covered tables might be found both those who sip the austere pleasures of chess and those who prefer, with more tempestuous emotions, to "read 'em and weep."

The remainder of the handsome building whose second floor was occupied by the Cercle Militaire was the American Guest House, at which many visitors to General Headquarters

were housed and fed both during and after the war. A certain, and not very limited, number of General Headquarters officers will recall, either with pleasure or a slight suggestion of headache, as the case may be, the fraternal celebration of Bastille Day, July 14, 1918, which occurred, chiefly, in the courtyard of the Guest House. The refreshments, it may be remembered, consisted of sandwiches and champagne. Nevertheless, the next day everyone was busy again for that was the day when Fritz hit the line along the Marne and east of Reims—and lost the ball on downs.

A still more important event than this celebration of Bastille Day, however, occurred in the Guest House 104 years earlier, when this building was occupied by Lord Castlereagh, the British representative to the chancellories of Russia, Prussia, and Austria while the armies of these Allied powers were engaged in their final mighty struggle with Napoleon. During the fluctuating campaign the monarchs of the three nations, with their prime ministers and military staffs, rested for some time at Chaumont and it was in the salon of Lord Castlereagh's house, on March 1, 1814, that the Treaty of Chaumont was signed by that minister acting for Great Britain, Prince Metternich for Austria, Count Nesselrode for Russia, and Prince Hardenburg for Prussia. By the Treaty of Chaumont, done in all the dark secrecy dear to the medieval diplomacy of autocratic governments, the contracting powers solemnly agreed not to cease warfare against France, still flaming with democracy and revolt against the old order of things despite the imperial form of her own government, until she should be reduced to the boundaries held by her at the beginning of the Revolution of 1789. Pending the accomplishment of this aim, each of the three continental powers agreed to keep 150,000 men constantly in the field, while

Great Britain promised to furnish the coalition with an annual subsidy of 120,000,000 pounds; an almost fabulous sum in those days. With the final overthrow of Napoleon, this nefarious conspiracy against France was carried out to the letter, setting back for many years the cause of human liberty, not so much in France, where it could not be suppressed, but in Europe at large.

During the period in which the Treaty of Chaumont was perfected, Czar Alexander of Russia maintained his residence in the secluded Château of Chamarandes, lying on an attractively parked island in the Marne. The imperial visitor appears to have treated the family of the Marquis of Chamarandes with great courtesy and many souvenirs of his sojourn there are preserved in the long salon, the curious old library, and the other apartments of the château, one of them being a life-size likeness of the then marchioness and her daughter, painted by the czar's portraitist, an aide on his staff, and presented to the lady mentioned. In the summer and fall of 1918 foreign officers were again billeted in the Château of Chamarandes but, though not of royal lineage, they were much more welcome to the family residing there, of which, indeed, in all respects of cordiality, they might well have been members. These officers were two young lieutenants from Chicago, of whom one was the town major of Chamarandes. Within the luxurious chambers in which they lodged, fitted with gilded Louis Quinze furniture and rare tapestries, they breezily admitted that they were "sitting on the world" and didn't care how long that sort of a war lasted.

A few hundred yards down the Rue Bouchardon and across the end of the Rue Girardon, a narrow alleyway runs around beneath the eaves of the Church of St. Jean-Baptiste. The pathway constitutes a short cut into the Rue St. Jean

The Rue Saint Jean, Chaumont

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Where Chamarandes drowses beneath the Chaumont hill

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and issues upon that street beside the south portal of the church, an exquisite example of Renaissance architecture incrusted with delicately modeled stonework and bas-reliefs of biblical characters surrounding and surmounting the time-worn doors, which in themselves display remarkably rich wood carving. In marked contrast to this elaborate entrance is the main, or west portal, lying between the towers and forming, with the towers themselves, the oldest portion of the church, wrought with the severe simplicity of the twelfth century.

The interior of St. Jean's, as it is smaller, is also less awe-inspiring than those of the great French cathedrals. A certain warmth of tone in its stonework and soft blending of the side chapels into the nave and choir, and of the massive, clustered columns into the groins of the roof, together with the subdued light which filters through its rich old stained glass by day and the not too garish illumination of its candelabra at night, lend to the ancient edifice an atmosphere of venerable friendliness very rarely to be found in a church of such really majestic proportions. Passing, on a summer afternoon, from the white sunshine and the workaday noises of the street into the cool, hushed twilight of these sacred precincts, it would be a cynical person, indeed, who could fail to feel a reverent quieting of the spirit as he looked about him. Directly before him, with perhaps a ray of filtered sunlight across her earnest, upturned face, stood, in its little chapel, Desvergnes' slender, armored figure of Jeanne d'Arc, the shaft of her upright banner in her hands and, at her feet, a pitiful little cluster of prayer offerings and of half-burned candles left by those anxious parents and wives and sweethearts and children who knelt to her for the safety of their menfolk, fighting for France in the far-off trenches of the battle line. Mid-

way of the nave the wonderful carved flowers, wreaths, and human and angelic figures wrought by Bouchardon, the elder, on the high pulpit and the churchwarden's bench, stood etched against the towering pillars while far down the side aisles past the various chapels whose walls were rich with time-darkened paintings, among them one by Andrea del Sarto, the faint flicker of candles in the chapels behind the great altar intensified the darkness of those secluded recesses and the jewel-like coloring of the stained glass above them. Through an archway looking across the breadth of the right transept the open, almost lacelike stonework enclosing the spiral turret stairway accentuated the height of the ceilings, while beside the high altar great French and American flags with those of the other Allied nations beside them, lent a startling burst of patriotic coloring to the otherwise subdued vista.

Nineteen chapels adorn the inner circuit of St. Jean's, not one of which does not contain valuable works of sculpture, painting, metalwork or wood carving. In the Chapel of St. Nicholas and St. Francis-Xavier is a stone carved Tree of Jesse of the fifteenth century, one of the most curious in existence. On the branches of the tree are seated fourteen figures, representing the ancestors of Jesus Christ but dressed, none the less, in costumes of the fifteenth century. The Chapel of St. Honoré contains a painting of St. Alexis by Andrea del Sarto, and several other chapels have statues by Edme Bouchardon. The vandalism of the Revolution destroyed a number of the art works within the church as well as the statues which formerly ornamented the south portal. But there still survives one of the finest groups — that surrounding the entrance to the Holy Sepulchre. It consists of a superb figure of Christ upon the cross, over the doorway, and figures of the Virgin

Mary and of Christ carrying his cross, in niches at the sides. These statues, with minor figures, and the architectural work surrounding them, were the creation of Jean-Baptiste Bouchardon, whose son, Edme, later copied them for the Church of St. Sulpice in Paris.

But the Holy Sepulchre itself, whose doorway these statues adorn, is easily the most remarkable work in the entire church. Set in place in 1471 in a stone vault measuring about 9 by 12 feet within and illuminated only by one tiny Gothic window admitting a mere pinpoint of light, this vividly lifelike masterpiece of a sculptor whose identity has been lost, has, for nearly 450 years, drawn to its mysterious abiding place the feet of devout pilgrims from near and far, particularly on the evenings of Maundy Thursday when, at the solemn midnight service ushering in Good Friday, the Sepulchre is opened. Such a service, never to be forgotten, the writer was privileged to witness on Good Friday Eve, in 1919.

A large crowd filled every corner of the church, whose central portion was well lighted but whose chancel and side aisles lay in obscurity, the outlines of sculptured saints and the dull glitter of gilded altars and stained glass appearing, half revealed, above the heads of the people. Although the congregation was so large one felt the homelike intimacy of the edifice, so unlike the austere atmosphere which pervades so many ancient churches. The gathering seemed that of some big family, facing from every direction toward the high pulpit, while the priest, pronouncing from this eminence the sober discourse appropriate to Good Friday Eve, was, indeed, like a father admonishing his children. At length he ended and the congregation, rising, faced toward the doorway of the Holy Sepulchre while the tones of the great organ rolled through the archways and the voices of the worshipers lifted

to the vaulted roof the strains of one of the majestic old sacred hymns. Then slowly and reverently, the crowd began passing through the low, massive stone portal, more than six feet deep, into the Sepulchre.

A blazing array of candles lighted the interior from one end, and beneath their glow the group of statues revealed themselves with a startling suggestion of life. Down in the vault, two or three feet below the floor level, lies the figure of the Christ, strikingly natural in face and outline though vault and recumbent figure are carved from one solid block of stone. At the foot of the vault kneels Nicodemus, preparing to anoint the body of the Master with perfume; at its head is Joseph of Arimathaea in a similar attitude. At the side kneel Mary Magdalene, St. John, and the swooning Virgin, and behind them are the Centurion, Mary, the mother of James, Veronica, and James the Elder. The colors of the statues and of the interior of the Sepulchre are strong and rich, despite the centuries that have passed since they were painted, and the figures are remarkably executed. It did not detract from the impressiveness of the scene to reflect that this group was placed in the Church of St. Jean-Baptiste twenty-two years before Columbus discovered America and that during all these generations pilgrims from the pleasant villages round about Chaumont have come on Good Friday Eves to pay homage to it, even as they had come on this night when, intermingled with them for a time as friends and neighbors, many American soldiers brought also to the ancient shrine a reverence none the less sincere because they came from a land whose youth forbids the existence of such venerable symbols of the Christian religion.

Crossing the broad street intersection before St. Jean's, from which one may look back at the grotesque gargoyles

projecting from the cornices of the church and the pigeons circling, in the rays of the westering sun, about the hoary, buttressed towers, one may turn, if he wish, at once into the Rue du Palais and thence to the Palace of Justice. But south a few steps down the steep cobbles of the Rue St. Jean and then around the corner where once stood the Porte de l'Eau, into the still steeper length of the Rue des Tanneries, there is a place that should not be forgotten. It is the Restaurant Trompé, standing back from the street, so modest and small that one would never give it a second glance did he not know of it beforehand. Once through the unpromising doorway, one found himself in a low room flanked by two long tables with chairs along their outer edges and benches against the walls on the other side. The table to the right was usually favored by French soldiers and civilians. From the one at the left the arriving guest in olive drab never failed of a jovial welcome from the group of American *habitués* who always assembled there for dinner; young lieutenants and enlisted men, most of them, with an occasional sprinkling of "gold or silver leaves" and possibly a "pair of eagles," but every man, it may safely be asserted, an epicure. For where else in Chaumont was to be found such creamy *potage,* such *veau* and *boeuf* and *mouton* in various appetizing forms, such modest but excellent *vins,* such brown and feathery *pommes frit*—yes, and even to palates grown weary of their Gallic frequency, such really savory *petits pois* and *chou-fleur?* And who that supped at the Restaurant Trompé will ever forget the added flavor which every dish acquired because it was served by Leone, the winsome daughter of the proprietor; slender little Leone, with her golden hair and blue eyes, her quick smile and grace of movement, and that wistful voice of hers that made her so startlingly different from anyone

else and so appealing to every man's sense of chivalry? Because of her, somehow when you left the Restaurant Trompé you felt that you had not only enjoyed a good dinner but had come in contact with a personality that embodied some of the best and most charming attributes of womanhood, which may often reach greater perfection in a humble home than in a palace.

The walls of the reserved old residences along the Rue du Palais echo the footsteps of the passer-by at any hour but never more loudly than just at sunset, which is the best time to visit the Palace of Justice, the Tour Hautefeuille, and the tiny garden beyond them. Then the stone steps, worn hollow by the feet of many generations, and the circuitous corridors within are deserted and as you cross the hall of the Court of Assizes, with its high, funereally draped judge's bench and pewlike jury and witness boxes, you realize something of the outward trappings which help to make the course of justice in France so much more pompous and awesome than it is in America. Another corridor which lies in semi-darkness with deeply vaulted doorways abutting upon it, conducts onward to a ponderous oaken door at its farther end. When this door, by no small exertion, has been pulled open, admitting a rush of daylight and fresh air, one steps forth into a little fairyland, borne up above the world almost as if founded upon a cloud. It is the garden occupying the site of the former donjon of the Counts of Champagne. A gravel path skirts the edge of the parapet, bordered on its inner side by rose bushes which in midsummer are weighted down with luscious blossoms, two inches or more in diameter, pink and white and yellow. The rose-fringed pathway encloses a bit of emerald lawn and a bench or two beneath the low branches of some patriarchal trees, above whose topmost boughs

looms the mighty bulk of the Tour Hautefeuille, brooding, as for ages past, upon the lovely valley at its feet.

From the edge of the ivied parapet, which is the base of the old donjon, one cannot look upon the scene without delight in its present beauty and moving thoughts of the past. Far below, in the Valley of Peace, as it is sometimes called, the blue and rippling ribbon of the Suize wends its circuitous way daintily between the neat gardens and the white-and-red cottages of the Faubourg des Tanneries. To the right the steep declivity of the Chaumont Plateau, from base to summit richly green with pines and firs, sweeps around toward the north, the dome of the Hôpital Civile and the roofs of the Caserne Damremont just visible above them. Far to the left, above the Faubourg des Abattoir, is discernible the length of that majestic viaduct, worthy of a Roman architect, which carries the Chemin de Fer de l'Est across the Suize Valley on its way to Belfort. Beyond it the last rays of the sun stream across the Bassigny Hills, casting long shadows over the Valley of Peace where cattle graze in the pasture lands and the rooks stalk solemnly between the haycocks on the dewy meadows. White roads climb out of the valley beyond the *faubourgs* and stretch away across the uplands by wheat field and coppice and woodland toward Jonchery, Villers-le-Sec, and Bretenay and those other villages whose spires can barely be discerned in the blue distance. And as one stands beside the donjon parapet with the perfume of the roses, symbols of eternal youth and beauty and hope, in his nostrils and the shadow of the sentinel tower, symbol of vanished oppression, ill-requited toil, and social slavery, above his head, he must realize more keenly why the people of France by instinct fight so tenaciously for the treasures of liberty and peace which they have wrested, bit by bit, in age-long strug-

gles from domestic despots and foreign invaders. As we in America, so they in France have all about them the evidences of their modern achievements. But they have, likewise, all about them the decaying memorials of the walls and shackles which they have burst, and ever on their borders the threatenings of those ancient enemies who would reduce them once more to a bondage as bitter, though different in form. Could any incentives be more potent than these to the ready spirit of sacrifice for home and country?

The Tour Hautefeuille, laid up of enormous squared stones and buttressed within by timbers like the masts of a frigate, was built about the year 960 and it is by far the oldest structure in Chaumont. Yet it formed, originally, but a small part of the great château which the Counts of Champagne first used for centuries as a fortress, and then for other centuries as a sort of pleasure palace and hunting lodge. The now fertile valley of the Suize was at that period dammed across its narrowest part, forming a lake which ran far back up the valley, in the midst of the immense park appertaining to the château. Upon many a battle, siege, and foray the old tower has looked down and upon many a courtly assemblage where cardinals and mighty dukes and even kings and queens were gathered to partake of the hospitality of the lords of a feudal house once as powerful as any in Europe. Today it looks down upon the court of justice of a republic and the homes of a free people; some humble, many comfortable, a few luxurious, but all far removed from the cheerless hovels of the ancient days. Had it the gift of speech, the Tour Hautefeuille might well prove not only a learned historian but a shrewd moralist.

Although a thousand interesting corners still remain unexplored, our wanderings in Chaumont must come to an end.

But, crossing the city once more in the gathering dusk to the extremity of the Place du Champ de Mars, we may leave it by the shady road to Neufchâteau, curving down the long hillside into the valley of the Marne. At the foot of the hill is the mossy wall surrounding St. Aignan's Cemetery, with the façade and tower of the ancient church, as old as St. Jean's itself, half hidden behind the tombstones and the trees growing among them. Beside the wall a by-road leads down toward the Marne where, on a sheltered little plateau above the stream, lies a spot more sacred to the soldiers from the New World than any other in Chaumont — the American Military Cemetery.

Slumbering in the deep peace of the valley, here lie buried 545 officers and soldiers of the United States Army and among them a few faithful nurses and welfare workers. Some of them died in the camps in and around Chaumont but most of them of wounds or disease at Base Hospital 15. The location and surroundings of the cemetery are most appealing. Close beside the parish cemetery it lies, the shadow of St. Aignan's stretching across it in the afternoon and the soft tones of her bell floating over it at matins and vespers. Here, with the peculiar tenderness of the French for the places of the dead, come often the people of Chaumont, impartially bestowing their attentions upon these graves of allies and upon St. Aignan's sepulchres; planting and tending the flowers around the mounds or hanging upon the white crosses at their heads some of those pathetic funeral wreaths of bead-wrought flowers and leaves which are the universal tokens of mourning in the cemeteries of France. How much better that they should lie there forever, marshaled with the comrades of their faith and watched over by the kindred people to whose aid they came in the hour of bitter need, than that

their dust should be exhumed and sent across the ocean to be scattered in the private cemeteries of city and village and countryside, inevitably to be at last neglected and forgotten! For here they may rest, as the dead in America's other war cemeteries in France may rest, still active factors for the good of the world as everlasting symbols of the union of free peoples in a high cause. Certainly to Chaumont, knowing scarcely a single American before the great war, the cemetery beside St. Aignan's is a bond of sympathy with the people and the institutions of the United States more strong and abiding than the most imposing monument.

So, as the lights twinkle out among the trees of the hill-top city and evening with its deep peace comes down over the valley where the fragrance of wild flowers and mown fields drifts above the serried graves and the waters of the immortal Marne whisper at their feet, let us leave both Chaumont and them, assured that here among the hills of the High Marne, fallen comrades and living friends have together reared a shrine to which the feet of Americans will come generations after the last soldier of the World War shall have received his discharge from the armies of earth.

CHAPTER VII

WHERE DREAMS THE STILL CANAL

AMONG the characteristic features of the French countryside, none probably impressed itself more vividly upon the recollection of many Americans than the numerous canals. To us they are more striking than to Europeans because they are comparatively rare in our own country, whose rapid growth has thus far outrun such intensive developments as canals for the cheapening of transportation. But in France they are, and for many years have been, important factors in the economic life of the country. In the region of northeastern France given over to the American training areas, canals, usually paralleling the courses of the larger rivers, are quite common and rarely lacking in beauty.

Among them all none is more picturesque than the Marne-Saône Canal between Chaumont and St. Dizier. In all that distance of 75 kilometers, or more, the accompanying canal is more conspicuous than the river, which receives only one tributary of any importance, the Rognon, in the region mentioned. The capricious little Marne wanders where it will about the bases of the hills and through woodlands and meadows, while the canal marches onward in long stretches of placid blue water, edged by the white towpaths and straight ranks of poplars, turning now and then only in a sweeping bend to conform to the general outline of the valley.

Just below Chaumont occurs one of these bends, where both canal and river round the base of the hill overspread by the dusky woods of the park which surrounds the Château of Condes. In a marshy bit of ground just at the foot of the hill the waters of the Suize glide into those of the Marne,

while high above them both the canal stretches on, its embankments clothed with grass short and thick as a lawn, and starred with daisies. In such stretches as this the big blunt-bowed canal barges appear scarcely to move at all as they are pulled ahead by a long towrope attached to a team of horses. Long accustomed to such toil, the animals lift and plant their feet with incredible deliberation, giving to their driver, usually a small boy, ample leisure for exploring the adjacent shores and for gazing back at the high hill of Chaumont, lifting the dark mass of buildings of Damremont Barracks against the southern sky.

The progress of a canal barge through a lock is always an entertaining sight, especially if one can watch it from the comfortable eminence of the iron railing, or one of the cement "snubbing posts" at one end of the long, boxlike lock whose substantial masonry walls are topped by smooth cement. As the barge, assuming it to be a descending one, approaches the head gates, the lock-keeper or his wife or daughter comes forth from the neat little stuccoed house which stands beside every lock, and by turning a windlass swings the great iron head gates slowly open. Into the lock the barge is drawn and the towteam then unhitched to graze peacefully by the side of the path until the barge shall have been lowered. The lock-keeper closes the head gates, proceeds to the other end of the lock, and opens the sluices of the tail gates. With a great hissing and splashing the confined waters begin to pour down into the lower level while the hull of the barge slowly sinks within the lock walls. Perhaps the family on board is preparing for a meal, for these craft appear often to be chartered by some farmer or other worker having merchantable produce who loads the fruit of his year's labor into the hold and, with his family in the cabin, and the whole upper

deck for back yard and recreation ground, proceeds in this pleasant fashion to some large city where he can advantageously dispose of his goods. The mere passage of a lock does not interfere in the least with the domestic routine of an itinerant family. If dinner is preparing, it proceeds; if the washing is finished, it goes up to dry on lines strung about over the deck.

In perhaps 6 or 8 minutes the surplus water has been discharged from the lock and the barge has sunk some 8 or 9 feet to the level of the next stretch of canal. Then the tail gates are thrown wide, the sleepy horses are hooked up once more to the sagging towrope and the ungainly craft with its family, and perhaps a milk goat or a dog gazing out across the stern, all blissfully unconcerned with the fret and feverish hurry of the world, floats off at the rate of some 2 miles per hour down a lane of turquoise water whose surface, scarcely broken by a ripple, reflects the feathery poplar branches and the blue sky above them like a pathway leading into fairyland.

The village of Condes, about a mile and a half below Chaumont, though possessed of less than 200 inhabitants, is said by the ancient chroniclers to have been a town in 961, in the time of King Lothair. Such a rate of growth would hardly encourage real-estate investment by the business man of America, nor does Condes appear to have attained great proportions at any epoch. We are told that in 1225, 264 years after King Lothair graced the place with his royal but rather nerveless presence, one Seigneur d'Ambonville, then lord of that region, sold to the Abbey of Clairvaux "all the tithes and revenues" not only of Condes but also of Bretenay and Jonchery for the sum of 240 livres, about $4,800.00, "in strong money of Provins." Evidently the good *seigneur*

intended to get his $4,800.00 at par value, for in those days the "strong money" coined at the local mint of the city of Provins, in Ile-de-France, was a synonym for standard weight and fineness.

Today Condes is a cluster of cottages on a little hill, encircled by a bend of the Marne which here runs deep and still past the ruins of an old mill, half buried in trees and bushes, and along the base of the steep hills towering up opposite the village. The highest point in the hamlet itself is crowned by the gray old church, a massive retaining wall holding its graveyard aloft from the street, which circles about it and seems seldom animated by other living presence than a few chickens and ducks and perhaps a cow or two. A few hundred feet above the village a bridge, its stones green with moss, arches the Marne and gives access to the lovely park of the Château of Condes. This place, even more secluded than the Château du Val-des-Ecoliers, was occupied during the latter part of the war by a number of Italian officers connected with the Italian Mission at American General Headquarters. A little stream, wandering down from the hills and filled, near the château, with a variety of rare aquatic plants, is said to harbor excellent trout, while along the winding graveled paths and roadways one catches glimpses of more than one white marble statue gleaming through the foliage.

Hardly a quarter of a mile west of Condes, the Marne-Saône Canal, within the space of a few hundred yards, performs two feats which, though not uncommon, yet always seem rather startling for a canal; it crosses the river and it goes straight through a hill. The broad aqueduct, solidly built of steel and cement, by which it passes over the Marne, permits the latter to make the bend by which it skirts the

château park and circles Condes. The jutting ridge thus avoided by the river, the canal on the contrary bores through by a tunnel 300 yards long and having a width of 50 feet and a height of 25. Upon emerging from the tunnel, the canal swings around past the foot of the hill on which Bretenay sprawls its two or three short, rocky streets and then again meets the Marne; but, for the first time since the two began their journey side by side near Langres, on the left instead of the right bank of the river.

In the floor of Bretenay's church are imbedded a number of tombstones upon whose worn surfaces can still be deciphered dates of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the names of long-extinct noble families of the region round about whose very existence is otherwise forgotten. But aside from these venerable stones and the views across the valley of the Marne, so lovely from nearly every village on its course that the temptation to linger in contemplation becomes a fixed attitude of mind, there is little to commend Bretenay to the wayfarer's attention. That is, little unless it be a certain curiosity as to where the vineyards grew which produced the wine unflatteringly mentioned in an addition to the litany made by the devout Chaumontais of olden days: "From the bread of Brottes, from the wine of Bretenay, and from the cheese of Verbiesles, good Lord, deliver us!"

Couched close beside the river on the bank opposite to the road from Bretenay to Bologne, the hamlet of Riaucourt misses half the sunlight of the afternoons because the shadow of the forest-clad hill behind it so early stretches itself across the gray church tower and the meadows close at hand. Close to Riaucourt, on the rolling uplands, lies a farm which was mentioned by its present name, La Ferme des Quartiers, in documents of as remote a date as 1184. Obviously, upon

ground so long cultivated, intensive farming has been necessary for many a century past in order to keep in the soil any productive power whatever and the success of such methods, practically in perpetuity, is shown by the really excellent crops produced on many ancient farms. In the church of Riaucourt one finds upon a certain worn tombstone a quaint epitaph which, freely translated, runs as follows:

If, stranger, thou dost wish to know
Who, in this sad house, lies below,
'Tis one who swore not save, "alas!"
And was esteemed a new Pallas.
Anne she was named; a woman sage,
Of noble blood and speech to trust;
Fixed in her home, where, in old age,
She wished her bones returned to dust.
Pray, stranger, to the God of grace
To give her soul a pleasant place.

If one but had the time and the facilities, in this widely diversified country of the High Marne, for journeying from one to another of the river villages on foot or, better still, on horseback, by leisurely detours over the hills and valleys back from the river, he would find at every step new beauties to delight the eye and at every turn a fresh variation in the smile of nature. Reversing the American method, in the town the Frenchman surrounds his houses and gardens with walls; in the country he leaves his farms and woodlands utterly open. Hence the Haute-Marne countryside, for example, is a paradise for the cross-country rider, being as free from fences as the rolling prairies of the old American West. Indeed, save for the greater abundance of timber, it is very similar in the general appearance of its landscapes to the country adjacent to the Missouri River in Nebraska,

Missouri, Iowa, and South Dakota. One might set forth on a much-traveled main road and, reaching the top of the hills by its dusty course, turn off at the first branching way, defined only by the tracks of farm carts. Up over a bit of stony ground it goes and then across a level bit of blue grass dotted with crimson clover. Take the gallop and fly over a half-mile of upland meadow with small pine woods at a distance on either hand, to slow down across a marshy brook and find yourself skirting the mossy wall of an old château park, with bosky woods across the way. On again, ignoring a main road which your cart track crosses at right angles, and out between fields of golden wheat.

Perhaps in the distance a farmer is driving his reaper, and shocks of bundles dot the sunny field with some rooks solemnly stalking about them and among the poppies and corn-flowers, which everywhere dash the dull gold of the stubble with vivid crimson and blue. The cart track fades to a bridle path but it is trotting ground always as the path winds between the small individual grain patches which, in sum, make one great field. The edge of the cultivated ground is reached. Across a bit of grass the path points toward a woodland, its border of outbending branches seeming impenetrable. But no fear; plunge in. A moment and you find that the path is a cool, green tunnel, arched over by great tree limbs and fair shrubbery, so dense by the wayside that it seems a wall, yet so well trimmed that it is always possible to trot if one wishes with rarely a branch to whip one across the face. Down a steep hillside where the ground is richly green with a dense, glistening carpet of ivy and the tree trunks have been turned to pillars of jade by its creeping vines, and here is a little brook bubbling over the stones in a bed shadowed almost to twilight by the dense foliage above. Up the oppo-

site hillside and perhaps a tumbled mass of squared stones with vestiges of ruined wall, glimpsed between the trees, causes one to wonder whether here is the ruin of some long-forgotten château or that of an ancient hermit's priory, for in this land of countless ruins investigation might prove either supposition correct.

It may be that at the top of the hill the path comes out in a *carrefour,* or meeting place of several woodland roads, marked, very likely, by a stone pillar. Among the various tracks leading off between the trees, one must be chosen for further progress, but the uncertainty of results merely adds zest to such a journey. You choose, and go on. After a time you come out suddenly into a section of the forest which is being lumbered. But it is not being slashed down mercilessly, the chosen logs snaked away and the ground left littered with shorn branches, crushed and dying saplings and mutilated undergrowth, as is too often the case in a lumbered area of an American forest. Every pine capable of yielding dimension timber has been marked with record numbers in blue chalk and is being carefully sawed preparatory to removal. Every particle of small branches is piled up neatly for use as fuel and every sapling whose future growth is desired has been preserved.

The road winds on through another section of standing forest and then, all at once, comes out upon the high crest of an open hill from which, in full view ahead, breaks the vision of the green Marne Valley, jeweled at intervals with the clustered red roofs of villages, while on the far hills beyond, in a sea of sunshine, islands of cloud shadows slowly drift. In the other direction, beyond a fold of higher ground, clothed with rippling alfalfa, rises through treetops the spire of a village church. Over the woods and fields rests the hush

of the summer afternoon, broken only by the far-off cawing of a rook. Then suddenly up from the heart of the alfalfa shoots straight toward the sky a little fluff of liquid melody. It is a skylark. Up and up he goes, a hundred, two hundred feet, his ecstatic carol pouring down like shaken drops from a fountain of music. Then, reaching at once the apex of his flight and of his song, like a plummet he drops again into the grass, to repeat his performance after a moment's interval.

Such excursions as the one just described, with infinite variations and additions, may be made anywhere among the hills of the Marne, not alone in its upper reaches but all the way to Paris, and the knowledge that on every hand such scenes lie awaiting the pleasure of the wayfarer, lends to the whole land a never-ending charm.

As the junction on the railway between Chaumont and St. Dizier at which a branch line runs off to Andelot and Neufchâteau, the village of Bologne is of some importance, as it was in a different sense as early as 757, when a Count of Bologne already held the country as a vassal of Pepin the Short, founder of the Carlovingian dynasty and father of Charlemagne. The place received its name from Ste. Bologne, a virgin martyr of the fourth century A. D., who met her death on the territory of Roocourt-la-Côte, on the opposite shore of the Marne. As has been mentioned in an earlier chapter, the counts of Bassigny and Bologne were the earliest lords of Chaumont and one of them, Geoffroy, was made the first Count of Champagne by Hugh Capet about the year 987. The place lies prettily along the left bank of the Marne which, near the village, is again crossed by the canal on an aqueduct. But the special importance of Bologne today resides in the fact that it possesses extensive loading platforms and bar-

racks at its military railway station, this being one of the assembly points for troops destined for service on the eastern frontier, in the event of mobilization.

It is scarcely possible as we proceed down river toward Joinville to pass a village with whose past there are not connected more or less historical facts or traditions of interest. Thus Roocourt-la-Côte, which was once in the fourth century destroyed by Ptolemy, a Roman general of the Emperor Julian the Apostate, shows a chapel marking the reputed site of the martyrdom of Ste. Bologne. At Vieville was once uncovered by farmers working in their fields, an immense vault made of bricks each nearly two feet square, laid in very hard cement, which when opened disclosed a fortune in Roman coins. Up the deep valley of a little brook entering the Marne from the west, lies Vignory, whose parish church, completed early in the eleventh century, is considered the finest example of Romanesque church architecture in the Department of the Haute-Marne because it preserves so perfectly the architecture and sculpture of its primitive period.

At Villiers-sur-Marne, whose cottages, containing less than 300 inhabitants, lie in a deep bend of the river and canal just off the main Chaumont-St. Dizier road, the writer stopped for lunch one hot and dusty day in August, 1919. Beside the house wall, whose shadow broke the heat of the sun, the table was set in the courtyard of the villager who was at once the local blacksmith and proprietor of the modest café and hotel. Near the door of the blacksmith-shop, hard by, stood a primitive reaper and a huge two-wheeled farm cart, with other farming implements awaiting repairs, and across the court, just beyond a wall clothed with carefully trimmed grapevines, rose the low edifice and squat, gray tower of the village church.

While the hostess, smiling with pleasure at having Americans as guests once more, was preparing and serving the luncheon of crisp fried potatoes, feathery omelette, bread and butter, and St. Dizier beer, a fox terrier belonging to the family displayed an unusually keen interest in the visitors, rubbing against their olive-drab trousers and licking their olive-drab sleeves with an unmistakable air of welcome. The family addressed the little animal as "Miss," a name strangely English to the ear, and inquiry disclosed the fact that she had been, until a few months before, the mascot of one of the batteries of the American Fifty-eighth Coast Artillery Corps, which had billetted in Villiers-sur-Marne in January and February, 1919, after the departure of Batteries A and B, Fifty-ninth Coast Artillery Corps. Upon leaving the humble Marne village, which was in the center of the Eighteenth American Training Area, the men of the Fifty-eighth Regiment bequeathed "Miss" to the family of the blacksmith and café-keeper to whose children she was a boon companion, although on her part evidently cherishing fond recollections of her departed American masters.

The hill country in the region of Villiers-sur-Marne, having rather sterile soil, has been largely left in forests, among which are some of the most extensive in the Haute-Marne. Between Bologne and Donjeux, in addition to numerous smaller areas, lie, to the east of the river, the Forêt du Heu, the Bois des Grandes Combes and the Forêt du Pavillon, while to the west of it lies the Forêt de l'Étoile. Each of these contains in the neighborhood of 25 square miles, or 16,000 acres, of timber. Communal woodlands and National forest alike are intersected by frequent roads and paths, making every portion of them readily accessible. Here and there among the great stretches of pine, fir and cedar, oak, beech,

maple, elm, ash, buckthorn, hornbeam, and other varieties of trees, are almost always to be found spots of romantic interest; a spring surrounded by a sculptured fount and basin, dedicated to some saint; a crucifix of local repute; the ruined oratory of an ancient hermit or, perhaps, the scattered and decaying stones of a medieval château or the hunting pavilion of long-dead king or duke or count.

The villages of Gudmont, Rouvroy, and Donjeux lie close together in a series of bends of the Marne and the canal, of which the latter is now quite active with barges. In the two villages last named, early in 1919, were billeted the portions of the Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Coast Artillery Corps which were not stationed at Villiers-sur-Marne. Donjeux, which boasts iron works and a cement factory, possesses also a handsome church of the twelfth century with an ogival porch and some well-preserved sculptures of that period. The River Rognon, coming from the southeast, adds its considerable volume to the Marne just below the village. Across the widened valley thus created, on the crest of a massive hill east of the Rognon, clothed with vineyards and orchard trees, stands a château built in the eighteenth century on the site of a medieval structure which belonged to the family of Joinville, whose most illustrious member, Jean, Sire de Joinville, the historian of King Louis IX, we will meet when we come to the city of Joinville.

St. Urbain, named in honor of Pope Urban I, the saint and martyr whose bones were deposited in the abbey there in 865, is noted for the delicacy of its wines, in the production of which most of its inhabitants make their livelihood. Indeed, in the sixteenth century it boasted a unique official, bearing the title of "Gourmet, Taster of Wines." But in St. Urbain the tiny facet upon which the light of history glows

is the day of February 24, 1429, when Jeanne d'Arc, escorted by her faithful guardians, Jean de Novelonpont and Bertrand de Poulangy and four others, rested there and heard mass at the abbey after her first night's march from Voucouleurs, through a hostile country, on her ever-memorable journey to the court of the Dauphin at Chinon.

One more small village, Fronville, is passed and then, on a hill crest where the road bends above Rupt, is disclosed across billows of orchard and vineyard, a charming view of Joinville, at a distance down the valley ahead, with the slender spire of Notre Dame Church thrusting up at the base of the bold hill whose summit supports the ruins of the Château de Joinville. A few hundred yards more through Rupt, whose own château with its curiously peaked and sloping roofs is not without interest, and the high-road parts with its bordering poplars, passes between the first outlying houses of Joinville into its long main street and by that into the Rue du Grand Pont. The latter, stretching eastward from the railroad station, is the main business thoroughfare of the city.

CHAPTER VIII

JOINVILLE-EN-VALLAGE

THE little city of less than 4,000 people which today looks across the varied verdure of the Marne Valley to the gradual slopes of the eastward heights, carpeted with varicolored blocks of field and vineyard and woodland, harks back for its origin to the reign of the Roman emperor, Valerian, whose cavalry general Flavius Valerius Jovinus, is said to have erected on the hill of Joinville a strong tower as a defense against the Germans. The town grew up at the foot of the fortified hill and was itself fortified by King Louis the Fat, that staunch friend of the communes, in the first half of the twelfth century. At this period the Joinville family became the feudal lords of the château and surrounding territory, remaining in power until the end of the fourteenth century. Then a daughter of the house, Marguerite de Joinville, carried the heritage into the family of Lorraine, from which it passed to the Dukes of Guise and finally to the Orleans family, of which the third son continued to bear the title, Prince of Joinville, until the overthrow of royalty in France. Students of American history will recall that during our Civil War, which occurred while Napoleon III was emperor of the French and, consequently, while the Orleanists were still active pretenders to the throne of France, the most important members of the family, the Count of Paris, the Duke of Chartres, and the Prince of Joinville, came to America in the autumn of 1861 and served through the Peninsular campaign of the following year as volunteer aides-de-camp on the staff of General George B. McClellan, commanding the Army of the Potomac. A few years

later the Count of Paris published a history of the American Civil War to the close of 1863, which, in all the voluminous literature on the subject, has rarely been equaled as a military study of that portion of the great American conflict.

The Sire Jean de Joinville, who was the most illustrious native of the little city by the Marne, is a figure of some interest to Americans and especially to the people of St. Louis, Missouri, because he was the historian of the great St. Louis, that king of France for whom the city of St. Louis was named. The Sire de Joinville preserved in his writings the greater part of the facts which are known today concerning that gallant crusader who was at once the most chivalrous gentleman and the most just and conscientious monarch who ever occupied the throne of France. The biographer who, in writing his intimate story of the good king's life, incidentally earned for himself an immortal place in literature, was not, under the feudal system, a direct vassal of the King of France but of the Count of Lorraine. Consequently he never consented to swear fealty to the king. But in 1248 he answered Louis' call to the Sixth Crusade, though he left his ancestral home above the pleasant valley of the Marne with heart burnings so keen that, as he has recorded in his works, he dared not trust himself as he rode away with his knights and men-at-arms to look back at the château and the town, the green fields and tree shadowed river from the last point on the road which disclosed that gentle view.

Serving the king with unswerving devotion during the six unfortunate years which followed the first brief success at Damietta and the disastrous defeat of Mansourah, in Egypt, he had the joy of returning to his home in 1254. Thenceforward he declined to be lured far from France and the simple and congenial duties and pleasures of a country

nobleman, either upon crusades or other matters. He was already a very old man when he began his *Histoire de Saint Louis,* which he completed several years later, in 1309. In 1315, at the age of ninety-one, he showed his doughty spirit by responding to the summons of King Louis X to bear arms against the Flemings. Surviving, with astonishing vitality, the rigors of the campaign, he returned to Joinville, where he died in 1319 at the age of ninety-five.

A man of amusing candor and much homely shrewdness was the Sire Jean. In 1282 he was one of the chief witnesses before the council at St. Denis which approved the canonization of St. Louis and he was present when the body of the crusader king was exhumed in 1298. But, though entirely devoted to his leader in the Sixth Crusade and as brave as the bravest in battle, the good Sire took no pains in his writings to picture himself as a man of heroic mold. Frequently he admits that in perilous situations he was very much afraid and states that on one occasion when a retainer proposed that he court the glorious death of a martyr by riding forth and defying some of the Saracen champions to single combat, he ignored the suggestion entirely. He makes no plausible excuses, as a crafty man would have done, for declining to accompany King Louis on his last and, as it proved, fatal crusade, flatly declaring his conviction that it was better to be in mortal sin than to get the leprosy. For his personal consumption he avowed a strong preference for undiluted wine. But once, when he regaled his retainers with a large quantity of good wine, he saw to it that the wine which was given to the soldiers was well watered. That which went to the men-at-arms was less diluted and the beverage served to the knights was in its pristine state but, by way of a hint, each goblet was accompanied by a flagon of water.

Those who attended the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis in 1904 will recall that the memory of King Louis IX received signal honors there and that his retainer and biographer, the Sire de Joinville, was likewise commemmorated by statues and otherwise. The statue in his native city presents him not as a soldier but in the "right clerkly robes" of a scholar and as such he is best remembered in his own country.

Above the far end of the street in Joinville on which stands the statue of the Sire Jean towers up the great hill along the crest of which are traced, beneath the trees, the ruined gray walls of the old château in which he passed the greater part of his long life. This imposing structure was demolished early in the eighteenth century and about 1793 the magnificent tombs and the carven coats of arms of the Sires de Joinville and the Princes of Lorraine, situated in the still existing Chapel of Ste. Anne, in the cemetery, were utterly wrecked by the revolutionists who, in their ill-considered zeal for their new-found liberties, thus deprived their country of some of its most notable works of art because these were conceived to embody the spirit of political or religious tyranny.

A much later château, erected by Duke Claude of Guise as a pleasure resort, is still standing in the midst of lovely gardens, among whose ancient trees, mossy and ivy-clad, are scattered tiny artificial waterfalls, lakes, fountains, formal flower beds, and groups of statuary. The spot is today a city park, open to the public. The château itself is a fine example of the art of the Renaissance, and its exterior is handsomely decorated with applied columns and many delicately carved bas-reliefs.

During their ascendancy the Joinvilles erected in the city

several hospitals and convents and a college. Today these have all disappeared with the exception of the Hospital of Ste. Croix, a long stone structure almost barnlike in its simplicity which, in the capacity of a museum, contains some interesting antiquities. The Church of Notre Dame, built in a combination of Gothic and Renaissance styles, presents in its unusually tall and slender spire the most striking feature in the panorama of the city. But the church is neither of great age nor of exceptional interest save for its magnificent Holy Sepulchre, the work of Antoinette de Bourbon, which was removed to Notre Dame from the former Convent of Sainte Anne. But the old quarter of the city around the church, with its narrow, crooked streets, among them the Rue des Chanoines, once the site of several religious houses; the Rue de l'Auditoire, reminiscent of the days when Joinville was the capital of the Vallage region, and the Rue des Marmousets, where are still to be seen in angular corners of some of the walls the grotesque stone figures, *marmousets,* is full of old buildings, some of them built of wood, which are most quaint and interesting. Many more such buildings were undoubtedly destroyed when the city was devoted to pillage and flames in 1544 by the Germans under the Emperor Charles v.

An artificial branch of the Marne, the Canal des Moulins, designed for manufacturing purposes, runs through the lower part of the town and achieves its primary purpose by operating a large flour mill and various foundries and other factories. But a portion of it called the Quai des Peceaux has become a residence quarter, usurping the place of industrial plants, and here are tiny gardens riotous with flowers and grapevines clambering up the walls of the gray old homes and over the summer houses built above the edge of the water, while mossy stone steps lead down to the boat landings below.

CHAPTER IX

ART IN THE IRON INDUSTRY

THE hills of the Marne, from Joinville northward to St. Dizier, though verdantly clothed in orchards and vineyards, yield a greater wealth from the iron ore which is mined in their depths and converted to metal in the high furnaces of the region and then to commercial ironware in its various foundries. Although a few of the plants mentioned exist in Joinville the town itself is not essentially a manufacturing center and smaller places in its vicinity are more active industrially. Thus, in descending the Marne, Thonnance-le-Joinville on the east bank and Vecqueville on the west, have stove factories and rolling mills. But it is only in the region of St. Dizier that the industry reached really great proportions before the World War, for the reason that it is there only that the ore was sufficiently rich to compete with the ore of the Meurthe-et-Moselle iron district around Briey, which the Germans occupied throughout the war and which they intended to hold permanently had they been victorious.

Most of the small foundries and furnaces near Joinville have disappeared but they have left behind them pretty villages, embowered in trees. Thonnance, in the Middle Ages, possessed a great château fort with wide and deep moats and drawbridges. This strong place passed through some severe struggles, particularly in the wars with the Germans in the sixteenth century. At that time one of the high hills farther down the valley gained the name, *La Perche,* by which it is still known, owing to the fact that the sentinel who was always stationed there was accustomed, upon observing the approach

of a body of hostile troops, to lower a white pole, or *perche*, as a signal to the garrison of the château to be prepared for battle.

At Vecqueville, which, though close to Joinville, is hidden from the latter by a hill, stands one of those rural churches which are so often interesting by reason either of their architecture or of certain relics within. The church at Vecqueville claims attention on both scores, as it contains a painting of the baptism of Clovis by St. Remi, executed by Henri Lemoine in 1610, while the sanctuary of the church itself is an excellent piece of architecture of the fourteenth century, the remainder of the structure being of later date and in no sense noteworthy.

There is an interesting explanation of the fact, observable in a great number of the French village churches, that the nave is frequently very inferior in workmanship to the choir and chancel. When these churches were built the local *seigneur* as an act of religious devotion often paid for the construction of the choir and the chancel. Thus pride, if no higher motive, usually impelled him to build as handsomely as his wealth would permit. The nave, on the other hand, was left to the means of the inhabitants of the parish and, since they were usually poor, it was often correspondingly simple and inexpensive. These circumstances explain, further, why the naves of so many churches, falling into decay, had to be reconstructed at later periods, sometimes in poor imitation of the original design and again in some new fashion, out of harmony with the older and more substantial choir and chancel.

Quarries of excellent building stone are in the hills adjacent to Chatonrupt, a village which nearly eleven hundred years ago had a certain monastery of St. Brice which was

demolished under Charles Martel. This place lies on the west side of the river and like Curel, on the opposite bank, and the other villages of this section, was originally within the principality of Joinville. The local lord of Curel in the twelfth century, M. de Hennequin, bore the sonorous title, Count of Fresnel, Baron of Curel, Chevalier of the Holy Roman Empire, and First Hereditary Senechal of the Principality of Joinville. The red-roofed village of today has little to commend it to attention excepting the fact that it is the nearest railroad and canal point to the noted Val d'Osne foundries, which lie about 4 kilometers to the east, in the narrow valley of the Osne brook.

It is a location most unpropitious for an industrial plant, with neither railway nor canal facilities closer than the Marne Valley. But when the foundries were established by M. Andre in 1834 neither railroad nor canal existed and the location was dictated by the proximity of the iron mines and of the Forest of Baudray, which at that time furnished fuel for the works. Since then the trademark of the Val d'Osne upon its products has become so widely known that its value more than compensates for the inconveniences of location. Hidden away among the green hills, of which those lying nearest to the works are blackened by the smoke and gasses from the chimneys and cupolas, here is found an industry which probably could exist nowhere else than in France. The reason is that its prosperity rests chiefly upon the service of art. The ateliers of the Val d'Osne could not be better described than in the words of the indefatigable traveler and graphic writer, M. Ardouin-Dumazet, in the volume of his *Voyage en France* descriptive of the Haute-Champagne and Basse-Lorraine. In telling of his visit to the foundries a number of years before the war, M. Ardouin-Dumazet says:

In the court, into which I am conducted by the porter, the ground is heaped with objects in cast metal. I observe cupids, a fountain, a crucifix standing head downward, a great stag carrying his antlers superbly. The appearance of the director arrests my contemplation of that multitude of busts, statues, madonnas, and artistic designs. Very courteously he gives me permission to visit the factory. . . . . An employee conducts me through the works. We enter the molding shop. In its center rises superbly a bull of cast iron, the work of Rosa Bonheur and her brother, Isidore, of which the Emperor of Russia and the Viceroy of Egypt have already purchased reproductions in bronze. The copy which I see today is destined for Roumania. Seated upon the animal a workman, armed with a chisel, is removing the imperfections of the molding, seeming thus to excite the ferocious beast until he is ready to leap.

We come, then, into the warehouse, which is fantastic and marvelous. A broad alley extends through its length, defined by two lines of railway track. On each side rises a row of statues, some of them colossal; Virgins destined to crown the hills, statues of the Republic for cities of South America such as Caracas and Buenos Aires. All the decorations of mythology are there, modern works or copies of the antique; abundant representations of Venus; Apollo and Neptune accompanied by an Eloa, as inspired by the poem of Alfred de Vigny. The works of contemporary artists; Carrier-Belleuse, Mathurin Moreau, Jacquemart, Pradier, and twenty others, give a more modern note in the midst of classical reproductions. Upon a space 100 meters long and 10 meters wide there are assembled a thousand objects of art in cast metal. Monumental fountains for cities, animals, and escutcheons, produce an extraordinary effect in this museum by reason of the confusion of the subjects.

It is true that the foundry produces, in addition to objects of art, a great deal of work of an ordinary commercial nature, such as structural iron, piano frames, columns, manhole covers, gutters, candelabra, benches for city parks, grilles, and ornamental fences, etc. Nevertheless its reputation rests chiefly upon its production of works of art.

M. Ardouin-Dumazet relates further:

The principal creator of that part of the industry of the Val

d'Osne is M. Mignon, who has always directed the efforts of the foundries into that channel. The appeal is to artists for the molding of the beautiful works of the Louvre and of Versailles. When the plant was founded in 1834 molders from the Museum of the Louvre had already been procured to organize the work in this obscure valley. Today it possesses 40,000 models, of which 800 are human statues and 250 statues of animals. Such an abundance of art objects are already fabricated that cities are able, as by magic, to provide themselves with statues, busts, fountains, and candelabra. Thus Liége, wishing to celebrate the completion of some great public work, was able to find at the Val d'Osne five statues which still embellish the opulent Belgian city and, by contrast with other objects of art there, speak highly of the superiority of our industry. The Val d'Osne, moreover, obstinately refuses to make cheap articles hastily executed. Thus it has been able to contract for works in cast iron where it seemed that wrought iron had the monopoly as, for example, in the case of the beautiful bannister of the stairway of the Tuileries.

As one finds his way back along the wooded road from the Val d'Osne to Curel and thence to Rachecourt and Chevillon, the timber becomes small and scattering on the hills bordering the valley and the steep, stony slopes, clothed with sparse grass, are marked by many winding sheep paths while here and there ruined walls trace the outlines of the plots of ground where at one time vineyards have existed. Rachecourt on the Marne, once a railhead for the Thirty-second Division when the "Red Arrows" were billeted in this area, is an uninteresting village, but Chevillon, a somewhat larger place, lying up a deep ravine east of it in the midst of important quarries of white stone, is more picturesque. The town once was a part of the immense estates of the Joinville family. It possesses few reminders of its medieval days but at the head of its single long street, which travels in serpentine fashion up the sloping ground, the stone church of massive construction, presents an imposing appearance which is accentuated by its elevation.

Immediately upon entering Chevillon the writer was witness to a touching incident well illustrating the bonds of sympathy by which the World War has bound together the people of all parts of France. His chauffeur on his journey of exploration along the Marne was a young Frenchman named Paul. As a speed artist with a Ford which had seen all of its best days his accomplishments have rarely been excelled, while a residence of eight years in the United States previous to the war as a mechanic in the Ford factories had given him such uncanny intimacy with the interior of the animal that, given a nail and a piece of baling wire, he could make it navigate, whatever happened. At the outbreak of the great war, Paul had promptly returned to his native country and served in the French Army throughout the conflict. During that long four years he had been at different times in countless villages of France, both along the front and in the rear areas, and had once, in 1916, passed several weeks in Chevillon when his division was in rest in that region. Since his sojourn of the dark days of the war he had not been back. But as we drove up the winding street and stopped before a modest house under the shadow of the church, a middle-aged woman came to the door, who for a moment regarded Paul with the indifference of a stranger. Then a light of recognition dawned in her eyes; with a startled exclamation she sprang forward and grasped his hands, pouring forth a torrent of welcoming words, for hers was the house in which he had been billeted nearly three years before.

Very happily she led us through the house, showing us the room which he had occupied, all the while recalling to his memory other townspeople whom he had known and questioning him eagerly concerning certain soldiers of his unit who had been at Chevillon at the same time, some of

whom, as she learned with obvious sorrow, had afterward been killed. Here were a Parisian and a villager of a remote region of the Haute-Marne drawn together by crowding recollections of dark days spent under the same roof. It is hardly possible to imagine a New Yorker and a woman of an Oklahoma village, for example, possessing a fund of mutual memories capable of thus instantly renewing cordial friendship after a lapse of years. As we finally drove off down the street, Paul's former hostess stood in her doorway waving her farewells until we turned a corner and passed from sight.

Three or four kilometers down the broad, smooth river road brings one through Sommeville to Fontaines-sur-Marne. On the way the track skirts a charming little waterfall, where the river foams over a semicircular dam and then dances away in silvery ripples that sway the reeds and grasses overgrowing the shallows below the fall. Just under the shore where the river whispers past Fontaines we stumbled upon one of the loveliest spots imaginable for the labors of a work-a-day world. Down a steep, shingly bank under the shadow of the stone bridge and sheltered from the summer sun by trees so dense that they make a leafy tunnel of twilight for the flowing tide, there was a broad stone platform on which a dozen women of the village were, at the moment of our advent, doing their week's washing. Though smilingly averse to having their pictures taken with sleeves rolled up and soap-suds on their arms, they seemed very content, as well they might be, performing this heavy part of their household duties in surroundings so cool and attractive rather than in a hot and steaming kitchen or basement. The *lavoir* by the river or brookside is an institution in every French village and it is surprising what immaculate laundry work comes, usually,

from such primitive washing places, where the application of vigorous and willing human muscles still holds precedence over every modern labor-saving device.

Near Fontaines, on a rough bit of open ground overlooking the river, stands one of the most massive and mystifying relics of the remote past which is to be found anywhere—the Menhir, or Haute-Borne. It is a huge, rough-hewn stone of the texture of marble, about 6.5 feet broad at the base and 2 feet thick, standing upright in the ground and rising in a slightly tapering form to a height of nearly 20 feet.

Held in awe and veneration by the people of the Middle Ages as the emblem of some godlike protector of the region, the Haute-Borne would seem unquestionably to be a religious monument of the Druids were it not for the fact that about midway of the shaft are still to be deciphered, despite the weathering of the storms of long centuries, some deeply graven Roman characters forming the one complete word:

VIROMARVS,

and fragments of some others. The best opinion of archaeologists seems to be that sometime during the period of Roman dominion in Gaul, this immense stone was raised as a boundary monument between the territories of two of the Gallic tribes, and that the original inscription probably meant, translated into English: "The general, Viromarus, has fixed here the frontier of the State of the Leuci."

Strength is lent to the theory that the Haute-Borne is of Roman and not of Druidical origin by the fact that a short distance from it, in the commune of Gourzon, is a high hill called the Montagne du Châtelet which has yielded

The "lavoir" by the river is an institution in every Marne village

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to investigators the remains of a Roman town. A later interest attaches to Gourzon, too, as a center in the Middle Ages of the celebrated Order of Malta, which here possessed at one time a chapel decorated with portraits of members of the order who had been canonized as saints.

Some five or six kilometers farther down the river, encircled by orchards, lies Eurville. Though noteworthy because across the river from it stands the Chapel of Ste. Menehould, where the virtuous and pious lady of that name died about the year 490, and because it possesses a beautiful modern château and park and a large ogival church erected under the direction of the noted architect, M. Boeswilwald, Eurville is chiefly conspicuous in the landscape for its iron and steel foundries, which, through this region, become more numerous and important as one approaches St. Dizier. Chamouilley, on both sides of the Marne just below Eurville, and Cousances-aux-Forges, a few kilometers farther east on the little River Cousance, are the sites of important steel mills and manufacturies of agricultural implements.

But it is at Marnaval, which is virtually a suburb of the city of St. Dizier, that the iron and steel industry of the Haute-Marne reaches its greatest development. Here the high furnaces and brick chimneys are majestic in their altitude and an atmosphere of activity constantly prevails throughout the place. Though for many years preceding the war the forges and foundries of Marnaval, employing more than 2,000 workers, had furnished artillery to the army and navy, as well as large quantities of construction materials to railways, they acquired a greatly increased importance during the international conflict by reason of the enormous quantities of munitions and material which they then turned out for the French government.

An amusing anecdote accounts for the founding of the forges of Marnaval so long ago as 1603. It appears that one M. Jean Baudesson, an influential burgher of St. Dizier who was desirous of engaging in the iron fabricating industry, bore a very striking personal resemblance to the jovial Henry IV, who then occupied the throne of France. On a progress through the realm, the monarch came to St. Dizier and Baudesson presented himself beside the king's carriage to request royal authorization for the establishment of the iron works. The royal bodyguard, startled by his resemblance to the king, instinctively presented arms, whereupon Henry thrust his head through the carriage window, stared in amazement at Baudesson and exclaimed:

"Body of God! Are there, then, two kings here?"

Then, being a native of the Province of Bearn, on the border of Spain, he mischievously added,

"Did your mother, Monsieur, ever go into Bearn?"

Baudesson, who was a high-spirited man, resented this insinuation and replied smoothly,

"No, my liege, she did not. But my father traveled a great deal."

The king, delighted at this sharp retort, readily granted to Baudesson permission to begin his cherished project.

The iron industry of Marnaval is responsible for a curiosity, and the only notable one, of the village adjacent to the foundries. This is a modern church in the Romanesque style with twin towers, which is constructed entirely of bricks made from the refuse cinders of the industrial plants. At matins and vespers the bells of Marnaval church answer to those of the spires of St. Dizier, already in view down the arborous avenue of the river

CHAPTER X

ST. DIZIER AND THE PLAIN OF ORCONTE

A WIDE extent of open fields, bordered on the north by the Marne and on the south by the leafy edge of the great Forest of Val, intervenes between Marnaval and the southern outskirts of St. Dizier, for this city of 14,000 people, the largest in the Haute-Marne, does not spread its suburbs very far on the left side of the river. As one approaches the bridge of Godard-Jeanson, however, large steel mills line both banks of the main channel as well as those of the canal, which, branching northwestward and approaching the river once more several miles below, virtually forms, with the river, a long island on which the greater part of the city is built. North of the canal lie the railway station and the extensive yards from which radiating spurs extend to the industrial plants. Some distance back from the wooded promenades along the Marne, the ancient Abbey of St. Pantaléon rears its picturesque mass of buildings against the southward hills, and one passes directly by the handsomely parked grounds of the Municipal Hospital as he enters upon the massive Godard-Jeanson Bridge whose graceful piers, springing outward at a curious curve to support the broad roadway, span the Marne and bring the highway into the city between the buildings of the departmental Asylum for the Insane, on the right and, on the left, the shady lawns and winding pathways of "The Garden," the principal park of the city. The people of St. Dizier do not stand much in need of public parks for the great forests closely surrounding the city, especially those of Val and Troisfontaines, which contribute to the place an extensive lumber trade, likewise offer in

their cool well-kept depths a vast extent of pleasure grounds.

Today essentially a manufacturing city, St. Dizier, nevertheless, presents to the visitor many interesting traditions and relics of the past. Set so closely in the heart of the town that the press of buildings render it hard to find and difficult to study when found, stand the still well-preserved remains of the château-fort with eight massive round towers and connecting walls 60 feet high, and a moat 20 feet in depth and 120 feet wide. This moat is filled with water from the little River Ornel, which flows down from the Forest of Troisfontaines and enters the Marne just below the Godard-Jeanson Bridge. Illustrious families, such as the Dampierres and the Vergys, owned and occupied the Château of St. Dizier down to the time of the Revolution and many kings and princes enjoyed sumptuous entertainment there. Yet the château itself, old as it is, presents, in fact, a comparatively modern structure built upon the site of a previous stronghold, the Castellum d'Olunna, whose foundation, though lost in antiquity, was undoubtedly due to the Romans.

It is a significant fact that, even in that remote day, the great colonizers of the ancient world erected the castle on the future site of St. Dizier in order to protect the passage of the Marne against German invaders, who might be tempted to descend upon the rich towns south of the river, even as they repeatedly have done in later times. The city itself seems indirectly to have owed its origin to one of these German invasions, for after the sack of Langres by the horde of Chrocus in 264, the refugees who escaped from that ill-fated city fled to the fortress of Olunna, bearing with them the body of their murdered bishop, St. Didier. Here he was buried and after the extinction of the Roman power the

old name of the place fell into disuse and that of St. Didier, corrupted into St. Dizier, was substituted.

Previous to the invasion of the Huns under Attila the capital and metropolis of this whole region, which is still known as the Perthois, was at Perthes, about 8 kilometers northwest of St. Dizier and likewise close to the Marne. But in his retirement from Gaul following his decisive defeat at Châlons, Attila attacked and utterly destroyed Perthes, which thereafter never was rebuilt save as an insignificant village, the mantle of its political and commercial importance falling upon St. Dizier. This importance increased with time and in the Middle Ages the fortified city surrounded by its deep moats and the courses of two rivers and with its massive château in the center, was a place of great strategic value in the midst of the Marches of Lorraine. Of the numerous sieges which it underwent through the centuries, easily the most noteworthy and stirring was the one of the year 1544, during the fourth of the wars between Francis I and the Emperor Charles V of Germany.

With an army of 40,000 men, the emperor advanced so suddenly that the French had no time to prepare resistance and the enemy penetrated as far as St. Dizier almost unopposed. Contemptuously characterizing the provincial stronghold as "a rustic village of hovels," the proud German host anticipated no trouble in quickly overcoming the 2,000 local militia under the royal governor, Louis de Bueil, Count of Sancerre, Captain Lalande, and the engineer officer, Marini, together with a handful of men-at-arms of the Duke of Orleans. But to the chagrin of the invaders, the little garrison made such a heroic defense that the army of Charles V was held before St. Dizier for six weeks, despite the fact that several desperate assaults were made. All met with bloody

repulse and in one of them the emperor's cousin, the young Prince of Orange, was killed.

On the other hand, Captain Lalande and many other of the gallant defenders were killed and finally, on August 17, pressed by famine, the garrison capitulated and marched out with all the honors of war. Its defense of the fortress by the banks of the Marne, the ever vigilant protectress of France, had been sufficiently prolonged to enable the king to assemble an army which, before long, forced the imperial hosts to retire from France into the Low Countries.

In the square of the Hôtel de Ville, standing before the Municipal Theatre, is a spirited bronze group commemorating the siege of 1544. Standing upon a pedestal which represents a shattered fragment of the ramparts is the symbolic figure of embattled St. Dizier, a beautiful woman with a standard raised aloft in her hand. At her feet are figures in heroic size of women and children casting rocks from the ramparts down upon the Germans and of the heroic men in armor, led by the Count of Sancerre, fighting and dying in her defense as they did on the day of the great assault, July 15, 1544. The group, an unusual one for a French city, since these have been so prone of recent decades to raise only monuments reminiscent of the disastrous war of 1870, is easily the outstanding feature of the central square, whose surrounding buildings, including the Museum and Public Library, the Theatre, and the Hôtel de Ville, are of little interest architecturally or historically, though the Hôtel de Ville is modeled upon the one in Chaumont.

Sleeping peacefully in the Hôtel Moderne, which overlooks the square, the Place d'Armes, the writer was aroused about sunrise one morning by the rolling of drums and the occasional flourish of a bugle. Thrusting his head from the

window with a caution calculated to discount observation he beheld a column of poilus marching with jaunty step across the square past the base of the Monument du Siège, their faces in the level morning sunlight, the drummer and the bugler at their head. And as his eye embraced, in the same glance, the tense bronze figures above them, Sancerre in front with upraised sword and open lips shouting defiance, the thought came naturally that if in nearly four centuries, the youth of France has changed so little in courage and patriotism and devotion, as these marching soldiers, veterans of the greatest war of history, had amply proved, then the future of France is surely safe, whatever may befall.

A short distance east of the Place d'Armes stands the Church of Notre Dame, built after the destruction by fire in 1775 of the medieval structure which formerly occupied the site and some fragments of which are incorporated in the present edifice. It is an imposing building of Renaissance design housing a few valuable pictures and pieces of statuary, including a painting of St. Charles of Borromea, by Salvator Rosa. Fire or siege seem to have injured nearly all the more important ancient buildings of St. Dizier, either before or during the Revolution, but an atmosphere of pensive antiquity haunts the purlieus of the Marne as one follows its secluded wanderings westward through the Faubourg de la None, where its surface, shyly reflecting the clambering gardens, rustic fences, and uneven tile roofs of modest suburban cottages, is broken sometimes into rippling laughter as the current finds, for a moment's sport, the wheel of some old-fashioned mill to turn.

As one comes out once more upon the flat, open country, marked north of the river by the rigid lines of the highroad and the canal extending toward Vitry-le-François, he may

recall that it was on this lance-straight road, in the early morning of January 27, 1814, that the cavalry advance guards of Napoleon, marching boldly forward from Châlons into the face of the mighty invading armies of Blücher and Schwarzenberg coming from the Rhine, encountered and hurled back in panic flight through St. Dizier, Blücher's strong vanguard of Russian cavalry under Lanskoi. The maneuver was one of the strokes of brilliant strategy which illuminated, as by a series of lightning flashes, the last wonderful campaign of the Emperor of the French against the armies of confederated Europe. By the reoccupation of St. Dizier he separated the forces of his two chief opponents and prepared the way for the stinging defeat which he inflicted, three days later, upon Blücher at Brienne, 40 kilometers to the southwest. But another locality close at hand is identified with a still more significant, if also more melancholy, episode in the career of the Corsican. This will be touched upon in a moment.

Westward and northwestward of St. Dizier the valley of the Marne expands, stretching away for many leagues in the great alluvial plain of Orconte; a region of fertile farm lands whose winding roads, broad fields, and peaceful villages lie embowered among poplars, willows, alders, and other of the heavily foliaged trees which are characteristic of the lowlands. Rock is scarce in this favored region, "the Mesopotamia of Champagne," and the wayfarer is struck by a sudden change in the construction of the houses. The massive masonry of the upper river has disappeared and walls of plaster or clay bedded between rough-hewn timbers have taken its place. More often than not the wooden framework is set with little regard to geometrical symmetry, but its artless irregularity is singularly pleasing. Though less carefully constructed, the houses call to mind the type of dwelling popular

The narrow, crooked streets around the church, Joinville

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Timbered houses. Hauteville

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St. Dizier

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in England during the period of Elizabeth. With their low-pitched, broad-eaved tile roofs and square chimneys and the heavily shuttered windows set in walls which often support a carefully trained and trimmed grapevine or pear tree, the homes of this remote bit of the Marne Valley are charming to the eye, though to the inhabitants of them perhaps less comfortable than they would be if built of stone.

The first bend below St. Dizier brings one to Valcourt, close to which, in the bluffs on the south side of the river, are some curious caverns hollowed out in days of old in exploiting a deposit of very fine sand. Great columns of living rock tower up, supporting a roof which was groined as excavation progressed and the huge, cloistered galleries, long since abandoned in favor of more easily worked pits under the open sky, are now floored with a sheet of limpid water which has been purified by filtration through the sands.

Through Valcourt the writer and Paul, borne by their faithful flivver, pursued a country road climbing upward along a ridge whose base is closely hugged by the Marne. Just beyond Moëslain it attains an elevation from which the whole vast valley of Orconte seems spread like a map beneath the beholder's feet and he may look down a sheer descent of more than 50 meters to the Marne rushing swiftly along the base of one of the most singular cliffs that exists on the entire length of the river. It is called the Côtes Noires. Semicircular in outline and about a kilometer long, these black hills are composed of a sort of sooty-colored clay broken by stratifications of red clay and marl. The black earth has been washed down by the rains in steep and deeply eroded channels; the harder substance of the red clay and marl has resisted the elements and remained projecting in razorback ridges and fantastic turrets and spires above the general sur-

face of the cliff, whose seamed and somber face, towering from the river, contrasts grotesquely with the valley's surface of smiling green woodlands and golden harvest fields.

Two villages, Hoéricourt and Moëslain, lie close at hand, but they are hidden from view behind the woods which cloak the swift-flowing river and it is only St. Dizier, raising above the far eastward horizon the outlines of its spires and factory chimneys, feathered with smoke, which conveys a remote suggestion of modern industrial activity into the scene. In the edge of the woodland which crowns the very summit of the cliff stands a slender brick shaft perhaps seventy feet high, which the writer took to be a monument commemorating the battle fought in this vicinity in 1814. He therefore left the highroad and walked up a straight, narrow lane, hedged with blackberry bushes, leading to the monument. His progress was retarded by the presence of limitless dead-ripe blackberries, the fruit which the normally thrifty Frenchman, animated by some ancient superstition that blackberries induce fever, utterly declines to utilize, but he eventually reached his goal on top of the hill. The shaft, however, proved to be, not a reminder of a bygone battle but an elaborate surveying monument, probably a triangulation point on this commanding eminence. A square stone, chiseled with the points of the compass, is set in the ground under the center of the shaft, directly beneath a hole in its lofty top, and in its base, bricks are also displaced for sighting to the cardinal points.

From the vicinity of the monument it is possible to overlook most of the ground covered by the battle of the Côtes Noires, March 26, 1814, a conflict not much dwelt upon in history yet remarkable because it was literally the last victory achieved by the great Napoleon. Fighting, as always in the disastrous 1814 campaign, against foes swarming upon

him from every side in numbers many times his own, the emperor, who had lately suffered severe defeats at Laon and Craonne, on his left flank, in vain efforts to prevent the junction of Blücher's army with those of Bülow and von Wintzingerode on the Aisne, formed the desperate but magnificent design of leaving Paris to its own resources for a few days and, with his army, moving boldly eastward toward the Rhine. In the fortresses of Lorraine and Alsace he still had thousands of troops besieged by the Allies. These he planned to relieve, unite them to his depleted army and then with the latter, thus reinforced, to turn upon the enemy's main armies between his own and Paris, cut their communications with the Rhine, and involve them in a defeat more disastrous than that of Melas at Marengo.

In normal circumstances, dazzling success would unquestionably have rewarded his enterprise. But the Allies were desperate. Finding Paris uncovered before them they resolved to throw discretion to the winds and to possess themselves of the seat of French empire while the opportunity offered, trusting, even at the risk of military disaster, to compass the overthrow of Napoleon through the political effect of their *coup de main.* For once in their vacillating careers the generals of the Aulic council read the situation accurately. The emperor, believing that Blücher and Schwarzenberg would dare do nothing but follow him when he moved toward the Rhine, marched boldly east from the Aube in the direction of Metz. Pursuing him and diligently spreading the rumor that they were but the advance guard of Blücher and Schwarzenberg's dismayed hosts, came von Wintzingerode with 8,000 cavalry, 3,000 of them, under Tettenborn, keeping touch with the French rear.

On March 25, Napoleon, becoming convinced that cavalry

only and not the main body of the Allied armies, was following him, saw that his daring maneuver had failed of its object and hastily deflected the march of his forces, turning northward toward the Marne at St. Dizier in order to regain a direct road to Paris. Von Wintzingerode and Tettenborn alone, with their horsemen, were at hand to oppose him and their numbers were totally inadequate to the task. Drawing up his troops along the road between St. Dizier and Perthes, facing the heights south of the Marne with the Côtes Noires almost directly opposite his center, von Wintzingerode, on the morning of March 26, sought to form a curtain behind which Tettenborn might fly from the approaching tempest. But in vain. Alison, in his *History of Europe from 1789 to 1815,* says:

> The attack of the French was so rapid and with such overwhelming force, that there were no means whatever of either stopping or retarding it. Their troops deployed with incredible rapidity; column after column descended from the neighboring plateau into the valley of the Marne; powerful batteries were erected on all the eminences, which sent a storm of round-shot and bombs through the Allied ranks; and under cover of this fire the French infantry, cavalry, and artillery crossed the Marne at the ford of Hallignicourt and forthwith fell upon Tettenborn, who was speedily routed and driven with great loss towards Vitry. Von Wintzingerode's main body was next assailed by 10,000 French cavalry, supported by a large body of infantry; while the succeeding columns of the army, stretching as far as the eye could reach, presented the appearance of an interminable host. The Russian horse were unable to resist the shock; they had time only to fire a few rounds; in a few minutes cavalry and artillery were fairly routed. In utter confusion, the Russian horse now made for the road to Bar-le-Duc, where Benkendorff, with a regiment of dragoons and three of Cossacks, with some guns, had taken up a good position flanked by an impassable morass. By the firm countenance of a brave rear-guard the pursuit was checked, and Von Wintzingerode gained time to reform his men and continue his retreat to Bar-le-Duc without further molestation, from whence, next day, he retired to Châlons. The French loss in

this brilliant affair did not exceed 700 men, while the Allies were weakened by 2,000, of whom 500 were made prisoners, and nine pieces of cannon.

After this last victory, Napoleon, rapidly approaching Paris, which was defended only by a handful of loyal troops, found the city already occupied by the enemy who had been welcomed by the disaffected and war-weary elements of the population. Thus, abandoned in the hour of adversity by most of the men whom his favor had raised to greatness and power, he found himself in a few days compelled to abdicate his throne. Such is the moving drama of glory and disaster which passes through the mind of the beholder as he gazes from the crest of the Côtes Noires across the Marne and the slumberous valley of Orconte.

Passing La Neuville-au-Pont, a few kilometers beyond the Côtes Noires, the Marne leaves the department of its nativity, the Haute-Marne, and enters the Department of the Marne between that village and tree-embowered Ambrieres. A high-road crosses the river at the latter place and wanders through flat fields over a flat bridge spanning the straight and dead-level canal into a flat, sprawling, and unattractive village, which, nevertheless, was once a place of such importance that, little of its actual history being known, legend has woven for it garments of barbaric splendor.

This place is Perthes, in ancient days the capital and metropolis of Perthois, a district 400 leagues square. The ruins of Roman and Gallo-Roman structures which have been excavated upon a huge circuit around the present village amply prove that in the days of the Roman power it was a city great and densely populated. Its early rulers were styled Kings of Perthois. About the middle of the Fifth century, A. D., one Count Sigmar was the lord of Perthes, a man who was the

father of seven daughters, every one of whom was canonized, the most noted one being Ste. Menehould, after whom the city of the Argonne is named. Sigmar defended Perthes against the hordes of Attila when they fell upon it in 451, but his efforts were in vain. The Huns stormed the city and utterly destroyed it. The surviving inhabitants, after Attila's departure, did not rebuild upon the old site but moved a little farther eastward and settled at St. Dizier. Perthes never regained aught of its former importance, though the title of Counts of Perthes continued to be borne for a long time by a powerful family, one of whose members, Munderic, was the rival of Thierry, King of Austrasia, in the Sixth century. One may still see at Perthes a fine parish church of the Thirteenth century, while the ruins of its era of greatness are of much interest.

The canal and the straight National highway to Vitry-le-François leave the Marne close to Perthes, and the river wanders away eastward like a truant through a long series of short, deeply wooded bends, upon whose banks only at rare intervals encroach the modest dwellings of some remote village. Such conduct on the part of the Marne is characteristic. To feel all the subtlety of its charm, one must recognize its native shyness, its instinctive shrinking from publicity. The American artist, Joseph Pennell, once gracefully phrased this mood of the river when he wrote:

> It is not, like the Seine, "bordered by cities and hoarse with a thousand cries." On its banks is no romantic succession of castles, as on the Loire and the Rhone, or of pretty villages, as on the Saône. It is so shy that often, as at Chaumont, you may think yourself miles away from the nearest house, while beyond the wood or behind the hill rise the smoke and spires of a thriving town. The scenery is as quiet. While most rivers starting from a high plateau force their way violently through gorges and tear like torrents across

the country, the Marne flows as placidly as the streams of the Lotus-Eaters' land, and draws its waters as slowly from the purple hills. Here and there the shores contract and fall to the water in vertical cliffs, but on a miniature and dainty scale. Then the high banks gradually lower, and the landscape widens, and on each side stretches the broad, beautiful plain where cattle are at pasture. Sometimes the plain meets the white horizon, sometimes it is bounded by low, rolling hills, and always it is full of variety of light and shadow. On the Marne one remembers the definition of classic landscape as one in which everything is elegantly, not passionately, treated; for everywhere, in the curves of the river, in the tree forms and in their grouping, in the lines of the rounded hills, in the tender green of the meadow land, is this elegance — the elegance of Claude, of Corot. The river never quickens its pace. It is not met by any great tributaries, only occasionally by a sluggish brook, which, however, I always found dignified into a river in the guidebook.

Such a "river" as Mr. Pennell mentions is the Blaise. It comes winding down through the great forests from a source not far from Chaumont and glides so secretly into the Marne below Perthes that the writer waded for fifteen minutes through reeds and tall grass and played hide-and-seek among trees and saplings so dense that their foliage made twilight of mid-afternoon, before he was able to stumble upon the buried little stream, whose mouth is yet hardly 600 yards from the confines of two villages, Larzicourt and Arrigny. The first is on the north, and the second on the south, side of the Marne and a long stone bridge, lacking the usual arches, stretches between them.

Larzicourt's streets of generous breadth are lined with low-roofed old clay-and-timber houses rambling down toward the water and above its fruit trees and evergreens an octagonal, slate-covered spire points to the peaceful blue sky. The church, quaintly square and solid, uplifts its spire upon a square tower whose latticed windows give to it an odd resemblance to a knightly helmet with vizor lowered. Yet this

structure is, on the whole, less picturesque than the neighbor to whom its musical bell gives answer across the meadows, at Hauteville, a short distance back up the river. Hauteville's square tower rests upon the transept of the church and tapers to a slender spire and four pointed turrets, all upborne by Romanesque buttresses carrying double-arched windows between them; a gem of a parish church, instinct with antiquity as a moss-grown boulder. The road leading up between grassy earthern embankments and slender trees from the Marne bridge to Hauteville is almost Breton in its miniature prettiness and the triple-arched bridge itself excites curiosity because of the fact that above the piers are carven wreaths, similar to those on the Napoleonic bridges of Paris, indicating that perhaps the Hauteville bridge, too, owes its foundation to Napoleon I who did so much for the highways of France.

It is typical of the wealth of France in historical association as well as significant, in such associations, of the place of the Marne as the protectress of the land and the embodiment of patriotism, that in this sylvan valley of Orconte, perhaps 6 miles broad and 16 long between St. Dizier and Vitry-le-François, as secluded a region, surely, as may be found in France, there lie several spots so eloquent of the nation's past. Allusion has already been made to the dignity of Perthes in the obscure years of declining Rome. Six miles from this venerable capital and, like it lying close to the canal, is the hamlet of Matignicourt. In the broad fields thereby, on September 17, 1891, France signalized to her own people and to the world her military regeneration from the war of 1870 by a great review held before the then President of the Republic, M. Sadie-Carnot. Twenty-three years later, in the early days of September, 1914, around Frignicourt, 5 or 6 kilome-

ters below Matignicourt, probably some of the very men who had participated in that martial spectacle, together with others who were their worthy successors, fought heroically and successfully to defend the crossings of the Marne against the ancient enemies and proved for all time that the rejuvenation forecasted at Matignicourt had, in very truth, taken place.

That huge review of 1891, regarded by Frenchmen as so important that it is commemorated by monuments on the field, in Vitry-le-François and in Châlons-sur-Marne, was participated in by four army corps numbering 120,000 men under General Saussier. It followed extensive battle maneuvers which had just been completed in Champagne and of its impressiveness an eyewitness wrote:

> The effect produced by that spectacle was magical. Those compact divisions, the leaders followed by a sea of bayonets all undulating to a rhythmic march, waked an impression of irresistible power and strength. The plaudits were hushed; in fascination the spectators watched the progress of those splendid troops, seeming to breathe with them as, defiling before the chief of the State, they moved with still more martial carriage, the flags dipped and the sabers of the officers inclined toward the ground in a salute dignified and noble. From the dusty artillery teams, the bright dolmans of the chasseurs and the flashing helmets of the dragoons to the wagons of the trains there was radiated intense life animated by an indomitable spirit. Before us passed the soul of our native land.

Twenty-three years later at Frignicourt, at Mont Mort, and Ecriennes, where the thunderous battle line crossed the Marne between Paris and Verdun, there was none of the display and martial glitter of the great review. But in the veins of the French poilus, staggering under the weariness of long marches and stained with the grime of battle, there flowed even more swiftly the spirit of patriotic devotion and self-sacrifice, presaged long ago in the presence of Carnot, the martyr president.

In our leisurely journey down the Marne we have now arrived at the easternmost edge of the zone, extending thence nearly to Paris, in which the river has played a major rôle in more than one event which has been of supreme importance not alone to France but to the entire world. Within the next 150 kilometers of the valley lie Vitry-le-François, Châlons, Château-Thierry, and Meaux. Of these, one, Châlons, has been famed for nearly fifteen hundred years as the spot where Western civilization was saved from subjugation by the East. The other three, during the years of the World War, gained immortal places in the annals of France, England, and America because at their gates the hordes of invasion were again stayed.

Passing by tiny Frignicourt where, on either side of the road, lie enclosed in neat fences several rows of those pitiful wooden crosses which the passing soldier always salutes, resting places of some of the men of the Twelfth Corps and the Colonial Corps who defended the bridge across the Marne on September 6, 1914, we pass over this bridge and, turning north, go by the station and the railroad yards. Then, with the Marne traversing the western part of the city a little distance to our left, we enter Vitry-le-François by the Avenue de Colonel Moll and the Rue de Frignicourt.

CHAPTER XI

VITRY-LE-FRANCOIS AND THE FIRST BATTLE OF THE MARNE

AS THE ages of cities go in France, Vitry-le-François is a modern town. Possessing today about 8,500 people, it was built in 1545 by order of King Francis I to replace Vitry-en-Perthois, which stood on the slopes of the Saulx River, 4 kilometers to the northeast of Vitry-le-François, the former town having been burned in 1544 by the Germans of Charles V. Although less salubriously located than the place which it supplanted, the new Vitry was laid out on a regular and harmonious plan by the Italian architect, Marina, with wide, straight streets and generous squares and parks, which, though they lend to the city on account of its flat situation a rather monotonous and barren appearance, undoubtedly confer upon the inhabitants a greater degree of comfort than is the portion of those dwelling in places more ancient and picturesque, but less well supplied with pure air and modern sanitation.

Fortified in the most approved manner at the time of its founding, the ramparts of Vitry were demolished in the nineteenth century. The outlines of most of them can still be traced in the boulevards and promenades, some of which are further defined by still existing moats, filled with living water from the Marne and the canals. But the most remarkable surviving relic of the fortifications is the beautiful Porte du Pont, at the entrance to the bridge across the Marne on the high-road leading through the extensive military barracks of the Quartier des Indes toward Sézanne and Paris. This noble structure laid of massive oblong blocks of stone is ornamented above the rounded archway of the gate with the richly blaz-

oned arms of the city carved in deeply cut bas-relief, while at each side of the gate are symbolic groupings of weapons and flags extending to a height of more than 24 feet above the pavement. A stone balustrade surrounds the top of the edifice, while eight sculptured groups of armored figures, each surrounded by flags and implements of warfare, rise above the balustrade, four on the interior and four on the river side.

Every current of the city tends toward the central Place d'Armes, where the Church of Notre Dame lifts its formidable bulk above the small shops and the square-cut trees of the Plaza. A strong resemblance to St. Sulpice of Paris is noticeable in this Notre Dame, with its massive, turreted square towers, though the great superposed columns defining the portal and the corners of the towers render the front more imposing than that of the Paris structure. The church was begun by the king in 1629 and completed through the munificence of many noble families residing in the vicinity of Vitry. The bones of numerous members of these families were formerly interred under the floor, which was solidly paved with tombstones, but both bones and sepulchers have disappeared during the course of later restorations.

Some large flouring mills, built, after the sightly manner of many such buildings in France, over the channel of the river below the Porte du Pont, or along the banks of the circuitous canals, give color to the older quarter of the town, though every section is dominated by the castle-like towers and roof of Notre Dame, which gives a still more decided character to the Place d'Armes, with its graceful bronze fountain in the center and its radiating vistas of broad streets defined by well-built business houses.

In Vitry-le-François, at the outbreak of the war in 1914, was located the General Headquarters Staff of the French

The mills at Vitry-le-François

[*Page 160*]

Vitry-le-François has wide, straight streets

[*Page 159*]

A battlefield of the Marne

[*Page 92*]

Sector of the Marne battlefield near Mézy

[*Page 163*]

armies; a fact which rendered the place one of marked importance during the early phases of the battle of the Marne. The approach of the German armies forced the evacuation of the place on September 5 by both the civilian population and the troops of General Langle de Cary's Fourth Army, barely 500 or 600 inhabitants remaining after the shells of the artillery of Duke Albrecht of Würtemberg began to fall in the streets, at about 5:00 o'clock on the afternoon of that day. During the evening the enemy's cavalry entered and the city became subject to the usual indignities visited upon French towns by the invaders, including the detention of prominent citizens as hostages. In Vitry, five hostages were thus seized and held, among them the curé and the curate of Notre Dame Church, to insure requisitions, see to the feeding of the civil population and to answer with their lives for any hostile demonstration on the part of the people.

For five days thereafter, while the shell fire of the German batteries to the north and those of the French to the south crossed overhead and sometimes sprayed the streets with splintered steel, the town was held by the enemy. The hospital, the schools and churches, and the large building of the Savings Bank were filled with German wounded to the number of nearly 2,500. On the evening of the tenth, in consequence of the defeat of their armies farther to the west, the Germans retreated, strangely enough leaving the place, except for the effects of desultory shelling, unmarked by the wanton destruction which left the hallmark of Prussian *kultur* upon most of the French towns occupied by them.

Since for many leagues in our progress down the Marne we shall now be meeting with scenes which will be forever in the future associated with the battle which, up to the time of its occurrence, was the most stupendous in all the history of

humanity, we may well pause at Vitry-le-François, where we have first encountered evidences of that struggle, to trace the general course of the conflict which determined, with the awful decisiveness of an act of God, that the structure of democratic institutions and the fabric of Latin and Anglo-Saxon civilization were not to be swept away by the first overwhelming blow aimed at them by their enemies, but were to be afforded time to organize for a struggle to the end in which they might assert their superior strength and virtues over those of autocracy. Thus only may the reader be able properly to focus, in their relation to the whole, the significance of the scenes of local events as they occur along the course of the Marne; for, like the stones of a mosaic pavement, such events were but parts of the great pattern of destiny which men now call the Battle of the Marne.

In those world-numbing days of August, 1914, when the German armies were rolling into Belgium and northern France, their advance may be appropriately likened to the slow opening of a gigantic door, hinged upon the fortress of Metz, whose swinging edge moved ever across Liège, Brussels, Mons, Cambrai, and Compiègne in the direction of Paris. With the majestic and seemingly irresistible power of an avalanche the hosts of the Teutonic Empire surged onward, here pausing, as at Liège and Namur, before the heroic resistance of little Belgium, and again struggling hard to overcome the ardent, but ill-timed, counter-blows of the French at Charleroi or the dogged opposition of the British along the Mons Canal, but never halting completely. By September 1 they had overrun practically all the smiling country lying north of a line between Paris and Verdun, the inhabitants fleeing before them in mortal terror. The Allied armies, suffering under the necessity, inevitable to the defense in such a situation, of fighting

with relatively weak forces and holding back their mobile reserves until the enemy should have demonstrated where he intended to deliver his hardest blow, were making merely a pugnacious retreat, inflicting upon the Germans as much damage as possible, but not yet attempting a final stand.

But French leadership had long foreseen that on the outbreak of war, Germany would in all probability perfidiously violate the neutrality of Belgium for the sake of striking France on her weakest flank and had made preliminary plans accordingly. General Joffre, the patient, imperturbable, far-seeing Commander-in-Chief, was biding his time for a maneuver and a battle whose possibilities, in such circumstances as were now shaping, had been anticipated. The French offensive in Alsace and Lorraine, undertaken contrary to such plans for the sake of its political effect in arousing the enthusiasm of the nation for the redemption of "the lost provinces," had failed miserably in the latter days of August, as the wisest minds in the councils of the nation had feared that it would fail, and the energies of both combatants had become concentrated on the battle along the Paris-Verdun front. German forces crossed the Marne at Mézy, Château-Thierry, Nogent, La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and Changis on September 3 and 4, at Châlons on the latter date, and at Vitry-le-François on the fifth. All along the vast front of 225 kilometers, the Allied line was still sagging southward. But this very retiring movement was creating the situation for which Joffre was playing.

So long as Verdun and Paris held firm on the east and on the west, the Germans advancing in the center were forcing themselves more and more deeply into a salient and exposing their flanks to turning movements from one or the other of the French citadels. In short, they were approaching the Roman position at Cannae, the classic model battle in which

Hannibal overthrew the army of the Roman Republic by retiring his center and then closing in upon the enemy with his flanks. But, at the same time, this situation offered a brilliant opportunity to the Germans and they were exerting every effort to utilize it. Theirs were the interior lines and, presumably, the superior numbers. If, by asserting their advantages, they could pierce the thinner, sagging Allied line at some point between Paris and Verdun, they might roll back one segment of the forces of their antagonists upon Paris and there surround and capture it, while the other segment would be driven upon the frontier fortress line extending from Verdun southward, there to be similarly crushed in detail. The question as to which of these contrary results would be achieved, resolved itself, ultimately, into a question as to the relative endurance and moral stamina of the opposing Allied and German soldiers.

On September 4, General Joffre decided that conditions had become as favorable as they ever would be for putting his plans into execution and gave orders that his armies come to a stand and prepare to assume the offensive on September 6. At the time, the Allied order of battle stood, from east to west, as follows: the Third Army, under General Sarrail, with its right flank resting on Verdun and its left in front of Bar-le-Duc, holding the Pass of Revigny, where the rivers Ornain and Saulx flow westward to join the Marne; then the Fourth Army, General Langle de Cary, standing astride the Marne at Vitry-le-François with its left at Sompuis; then the Ninth Army, General Foch, lying south of the Marches of St. Gond with its left north of Sézanne; then the Fifth Army, General Franchet d'Esperey, extending to about Courtacon, north of Provins; then the British Army under Field Marshal French, reaching to a point south of Meaux; and then, lastly, the

Sixth Army, General Maunoury, covering Paris. The capital itself was under the direct control of the military governor, General Gallieni, who had at his command not only General Maunoury's army but also important masses of troops destined exclusively for the defense of the city; all subject, of course, to the supreme authority of the Commander-in-Chief. Of the armies enumerated, those of General Foch and General Maunoury had not participated in the retreat but had been newly constituted, chiefly from reserves, and placed in line only in time to take part in the counter-offensive.

Assailing the Allied host the Germans had, approximately opposite General Sarrail, their Fifth Army under the Crown Prince of Germany; in front of Langle de Cary the Fourth Army under Duke Albrecht of Würtemberg; opposite to Foch the Third Army under General von Hausen; opposite to D'Esperey the Second Army under General von Bülow, and opposite to the British Army and the entrenched camp of Paris, the First Army under General von Klück.

As a measure of safety, the seat of the French government had been removed on September 3 from Paris to Bordeaux, but any elements of the population which feared that this precaution foreshadowed the military evacuation of the metropolis were reassured by the stirring proclamation of General Gallieni, who announced: "I have received orders to defend Paris against invasion. I shall do so to the end." Until that day it was popularly believed that von Klück's army, on the marching flank of the German advance, was driving forward with the intention of taking Paris. This was not the case. No city, however important, but the destruction of the Allied armies in the field, was, quite properly, the primary objective of the German campaign, for, those armies once disposed of, everything else would of necessity fall into the hands of the

victors. But the popular illusion was dispelled when it was learned on the momentous fourth of September, anniversary of the fall, in 1870, of the Third Empire after the *débâcle* of Sedan, that von Klück's columns, ignoring the garrison of Paris as being too conscious of its defensive rôle to initiate any hostile movements and believing the British Army to be completely exhausted after its nerve-wracking retreat of 200 kilometers from Mons, had deflected to the southeastward from their direct march on the city and were passing parallel to the front of the Allies in the direction of Coulommiers, on the Grand Morin River. The German intent evidently was to carry out their cherished maneuver by piercing the Allied line between the armies of French and D'Esperey and then rolling the former back upon Paris and the latter upon the eastern frontier. In the meantime, all the other German armies up to Verdun were assailing their opponents with the utmost vigor possible.

The enemy having thus disclosed his intentions and launched his attack, Joffre, on September 5, prepared the counter-stroke. Relying upon the staunchness of the British as well as of D'Esperey's troops to hold their ground and to advance when the proper time should arrive, he ordered Gallieni to push Maunoury's Sixth Army northeastward from Paris, strike von Klück's right flank, which was defiling along the heights west of the Ourcq and turn it and drive it back across the latter river. If successful, the effect of the maneuver would be, after von Klück should have been disposed of, to also take von Bülow and von Hausen successively in flank and rear and to either surround them or force them to retreat precipitately. As a corollary to Maunoury's attack, Sarrail was ordered to assume the offensive against the German Crown Prince and drive him westward, carrying Würtemberg with

him into a cul-de-sac back to back with the armies of the German right. The intervening armies were instructed likewise to attack energetically and under no circumstances to yield any further ground to the enemy.

Held admirably in hand during their long and difficult retreat, the armies of Joffre were able to about-face upon their counter-attack positions in the best of order and spirit. On the morning of September 5, General Maunoury's army to the number of eight divisions advanced across the plateau north of Meaux and west of the Ourcq and fell upon the five German divisions of von Klück's right flank, which were quite unprepared for such a tremendous onslaught. In desperate fighting on that day and the next, Maunoury's troops slowly drove the enemy back across the broad, open fields of the Multien district and through the crumbling villages of Monthyon, Neufmontiers, Penchard, Chambry, Barcy, and Marcilly until the Germans were clinging precariously to the edge of the hills overlooking the Ourcq and the Marne.

Meantime, ignorant of the dangers accumulating behind them, the forward echelons of von Klück's army were marching confidently across the front of the British toward Courtacon and the left flank of D'Esperey, not doubting that they would dislocate the junction of the two armies by a powerful attack. But at dawn of the sixth, Marshal French's five British infantry divisions and five cavalry brigades, issued from the Forest of Crécy behind which they had been resting and advanced to the south bank of the Grand Morin, driving back the enemy's covering detachments and establishing themselves in good positions for the furious attack which they delivered the next morning upon the four divisions of von Klück's advance. That day saw the British, at the cost of savage fighting, drive forward all along their front, roundly

defeating the German cavalry, while deadly British artillery fire littered the ground with the débris of the retreating German batteries. By nightfall they had crossed the Grand Morin and captured Coulommiers, thus completely baring von Klück's flank for further attack. The German general, who had aroused fully to the menace of Maunoury's attack west of the Ourcq, had been compelled to detach against it an entire corps from the offensive mass with which he had designed to crush D'Esperey. The weakening of his left was fatal. D'Esperey, relieved of pressure, was able on the seventh to push across the Grand Morin and bring his front up in line with the British. In their left center, all was going well with the Allies.

On the front of Paris, meantime, Gallieni was taking radical measures. Perceiving that Maunoury, despite his utmost efforts, was not progressing as fast as was desirable, nor accomplishing the envelopment of the German flank, he detached a division from the garrison of Paris to aid him. On the night of September 7-8, requisitioning taxicabs on the streets of Paris to the number of not less than 1,100, he had the troops loaded into them and sent, at almost express-train speed, to Maunoury's left flank to extend it for the enveloping movement. Von Klück's timely steps for reinforcing his own flank, however, unfortunately neutralized the effect of this expedient and during September 8, the French found themselves compelled to fight hard to escape being themselves enveloped.

While, on the seventh and eighth, the armies of the Allied left were, on the whole, fighting victoriously and gradually hemming von Klück into a narrowing salient, the armies of the center and right, far from being able to advance, were having a terrible struggle to save themselves from destruc-

tion. The German high command, realizing that the Anglo-French counter-offensive in front of Paris might defeat them entirely, ordered their other armies as far as Verdun to drive in with all their power and break through the lines of their opponents at any cost. During September 7, von Bülow particularly concentrated his efforts on piercing the French line between D'Esperey and Foch while Würtemberg and the Crown Prince cooperated in a similar effort to carry the Pass of Revigny, hoping there to separate Langle de Cary from Sarrail. Their efforts were unsuccessful, either on that day or the next. But the French, reeling under the blows rained upon them, were forced back slightly at nearly all points while Foch, who was sustaining the most furious attacks from a large part of von Bülow's army and the whole of von Hausen's, was driven entirely from the Marches of St. Gond and found himself in a situation in which any general less nobly endowed with moral fortitude and martial insight would have yielded to defeat. But not so with Foch. He clearly perceived that the violent efforts of the Germans in the center were dictated by the extreme peril of their right and, knowing that assuredly their troops could be little less exhausted and in little better heart than his own, he held his men firm and at the end of the day pronounced the situation "excellent," despite the fact that the whole Allied line from Verdun to Sézanne was trembling and seemed on the verge of breaking.

At Marathon and Châlons and Tours there were days of destiny. Days when it seemed that an overruling Providence, intervening only when the very fate of humanity was in the balance, gave to the forces representing the true progress of mankind the slight added impulsion necessary to determine that neither Persian nor Saracen nor Hun should dominate the

future of Europe.* Such another day came in the Battle of the Marne the ninth of September. Von Klück, having already decided, though unknown to his opponents, that his position between Maunoury and the British, already descending upon the Marne from Changis to Château-Thierry, was quite hopeless, had begun his retreat northeast, toward Soissons. To cover the movement he withdrew yet another corps from his left and hurled it upon Maunoury's exposed flank. The latter was bent back and ever back among the uplands about Nanteuil-le-Haudouin until it seemed that it must give way entirely and be driven in rout upon Paris. But still, hour after hour, it held.

That day, on the center and right, the situation of the French was even more desperate, if possible, than it was on their left. South of the Marches of St. Gond the troops of Foch's Ninth Army were forced back to the line of heights extending southeast from Soizy to Linthes, which marks the watershed between the valleys of the Petit Morin and the Aube. All day they strove intensely to save themselves from being pushed off the heights to the southward descending slopes by von Hausen and the left of von Bülow; an event which, had it occurred, would have resulted inevitably in the breaking of the line. Despite the fact that von Bülow's right, exposed by the withdrawal of von Klück, was now being rapidly pushed back upon the Marne by D'Esperey, the last mighty efforts of the Germans to retrieve themselves from disaster by disrupting the Allied center would probably have been crowned with success had it not been for the heroic devotion of one French division under the stress of numbing fatigue and heavy losses.

This division was the Forty-second, under General Grossetti. For four days it had fought continuously on Foch's

left, along the hills just west of the Marches of St. Gond, maintaining liaison, against the repeated assaults of von Bülow, with the neighboring flank of D'Esperey. Reduced to little more than a skeleton by its losses, it was relieved on the morning of the ninth by one of D'Esperey's divisions and retired for the rest which it had richly earned. Then came the shattering attacks farther to the right on the line from Allemont through Mont Chalmont to Linthes, which General Humbert's Moroccan Division, stubbornly contesting every inch of ground, was barely able to sustain. Immediately to the right of the Moroccans, the French, gave ground and from 1:00 o'clock to 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon the Germans were within a hair's-breadth of pushing through into the plain of the Aube, whence they would have swept the Moroccans from the reverse slopes, split Foch's army in twain, and probably brought about a complete defeat for the Allies.

But Foch had one card left to play. He sent orders to Grossetti's retiring division to return to the battle and attack the enemy between Linthes and the village south of it, Pleurs. Gathering themselves together with superb spirit to obey the unexpected order, these men took up their march behind the battle line and at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon, with waves thinned but animated to a superhuman effort, they burst upon the dismayed Germans north of Pleurs. It was the weakest spot in the enemy's line, the junction point between the armies of von Bülow and von Hausen. Their troops were expending the last ounce of their strength to win through to the Aube Plain and they had no reserves left with which to meet Grossetti's stroke. The result was hardly for a moment in doubt. Utterly discouraged, the Germans broke back toward the marshes before Grossetti's attack, which was rapidly extended toward Mont Chalmont and Allemont by the now exultant

Moroccans. Thereupon the German high command, seeing the long struggle at last irretrievably lost, issued their orders for a general retreat. By such a narrow margin may a battle involving even millions of men be lost or won. That night Foch's pursuing troops gathered in many prisoners and guns along the obscure roads which thread the Marches of St. Gond, while farther to the right Langle de Cary and Sarrail, who had been hard beset to hold their ground during the last few days of the battle, pressed hotly after the withdrawing columns of Würtemberg and the Crown Prince.

The great battle was over and France, the whole Allied cause, were, for the time being, saved. Retreating far to the north of the Marne, the Germans made no attempt to halt until the thirteenth of September, when they stopped and established themselves on the line extending north of Soissons and Reims through the center of the Argonne and north of Verdun which thereafter became the intrenched, stabilized front of the four ensuing years of the war.

Behind them the invaders left a country for the most part ravaged and desolated, not alone by the inevitable destructiveness of modern battle but, also, too often, by the hand of wanton and brutal vandalism. It is not the purpose of the present writer to dwell upon the distressing ruin visited upon the venerable cities, the sequestered villages, and the charming countrysides of northern France during the World War, nor to marshal the ghastly array of acts of inhuman cruelty, almost countless in number, to which its unfortunate inhabitants were subjected by the invaders, especially during the early months of the conflict. But it will be the part of merely elemental truth and justice to mention, in passing, a few of the cases which will fall directly under our eyes as we pursue our way down the Marne, the river which, though it saw little of the

crucial fighting in that never-to-be-forgotten September of 1914, yet flowed through the center of the farflung battle-fields and witnessed a small percentage of the deeds of the enemy as it flowed on its placid way toward the sea.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHAMPAGNE POUILLEUSE

THAT rather vaguely defined district of old Champagne which, extending northeast, roughly, from Troyes to Ste. Menehould, at the foot of the Argonne Forest, is known as the Champagne Pouilleuse, has probably seldom been better pictured in few words than by M. Ardouin-Dumazet in his *Voyage en France,* volume 21. Therein he writes:

If one find a point sufficiently elevated to overlook the details of the country, he will be able to comprehend with one sweep of the eye the characteristics of the region. At the edge of a horizon almost circular, one traces the soft undulations of the woodlands of little pines which become almost forests on the most elevated places. Between these distant woods are spread the white *savarts,* the clouds of heavy dust revealing the passage of sheep herds which seek pasturage in the arid lands. On the borders of the villages, the pine plantations extend in long, low masses, regular in form, planted upon the *triaux,* or fallow lands which are put under cultivation only at long intervals and which furnish to the sheep valuable resources when the *savarts* will no longer yield a blade of grass. Nearer still are the permanent fields, the *sombre;* a picturesque and striking word for denoting the contrast with the white earth of the *triaux* and the *savarts.* There, thanks to fertilization, Champagne has been transformed. The cereals — rye, barley, oats, wheat, and buckwheat, flourish there; clover, alfalfa, and sainfoin furnish nearly all that is necessary for raising large numbers of cattle.

Such progress is the work of the nineteenth century; indeed, of the last fifty years of it. When the Allies struggled in these plains against Napoleon, the Pomeranian grenadiers and the Cossacks could well believe themselves still in their own sterile native countries. The waste extended almost illimitable, destitute of pine trees, and with but here and there a juniper or stunted willow. Around the villages the straw of the meager rye fields was the only fuel known. There were few if any cattle, save in the moist grounds of the narrow valleys. Nevertheless, the chalk does not lack fertility; wherever

it has been possible to improve it with marl and some fertilizer it produces excellent harvests.

Reforestation has transformed everything. The pines have produced fuel and permitted the straw to be utilized for its customary purposes as litter and fertilizer. They have modified the climate and reduced the temperature. Less widely known than the transformation of the Landes, the Sologne, or the Dombes, the conquest of the Champagne Pouilleuse is, none the less, one of the works most creditable to the patient industry of our race.

This description of the Champagne Pouilleuse applies not only to the broad section of it south of the Marne and to that great sweep north of the river, extending from Reims to the Argonne, which was so sadly devastated between 1914 and 1918, but to the wide, shallow valley of the river itself, passing through the very heart of the region and constituting its principal watercourse. Although the country is barren it has attractions of its own. Some of the villages, commonplace enough in themselves, which are scattered along the river between Vitry and Châlons — places such as Loisy, Songy, and La Chaussée; Vitry-la-Ville, Omey, Vesigneul, Sarry, and Compertrix, possess parish churches or other archaic objects of more than passing interest.

The church at Loisy-sur-Marne is a particularly attractive thirteenth-century structure, while the one of the same period at Compertrix is jeweled with a noble stained-glass window more than six hundred years old, representing Christ upon the cross and possesses, besides, two medallions of the sixteenth century showing St. Louis with St. John the Baptist. The church of Sarry cherishes a finely carved altar chair of the seventeenth century, a carved panel of the Flemish school depicting the Annunciation, a sixteenth-century equestrian statue of St. Julian in carved wood and also carved altar brackets and wainscotting of later date. At Vitry-la-Ville

there is a fine château of the eighteenth century and at Cheppes the remains of a Roman camp which is often pointed out, though erroneously, as a camp of Attila's army.

None of these villages are of more than local importance but, having ample building space, they ramble carelessly over the valley grounds, their houses, which are sometimes of stone and sometimes of plaster and timber, hidden away in gardens where flourish apple and plum, pear and cherry trees, and where grape- and peavines clamber over walls and trellised summer houses. Precisely such cottonwood trees as abound in the American West are everywhere in the villages, but the distant, low hills show always the dark, narrow ribbons of the pine plantations against the wastes of white chalk. Since the chalk beds underlying the Champagne Pouilleuse, so scientists tell us, extend to a depth of 1,300 feet, the only salvation for agriculture lies in the creation of a thin top layer of vegetable humus by the slow process of pine planting and the systematic application of fertilizers. The greatest disaster which befell the northern part of this country during the late war was not the destruction of the towns, for these can be rebuilt; but when, over many thousands of acres, the chalk subsoil was thrown to the surface by intrenching tools and the explosion of millions of shells, an injury was inflicted upon the land which can only be repaired by the labor of generations.

The Champagne Pouilleuse might be appropriately designated the land of *sommes;* a word of provincial origin meaning "springs." In the names of places on the high plateaus where many of the brooks and little rivers of the region come into being the word frequently occurs in compounds such as Sompuis or Sommesous and, north of the Marne, in the names of some of the shattered towns which became so very familiar to many Americans during the battle summer and autumn of

1918; Sommepy, Somme-Vesle, Somme-Tourbe, and Somme-Suippe.

Depressing, if not positively melancholy, is the general aspect of this land, beyond the zone of the ever-umbrageous Marne Valley. The bulk of the immense, pallid hills, swollen gradually up like rollers of a petrified ocean, stand limned against a horizon whose cheerful azure seems stricken, also, with a pallor of the chalk, its jaundiced whiteness but accentuated by the straight, dark belts of small pines. Along the broad intrenched belt of the Western Front, when it had been deserted by the armies just before the armistice, the country was a hades worthy of the descriptive pen of Dante. There ran in every direction and to the limit of vision the zigzag gashes of trench lines, seaming the hills with white pencilings, burrowing snakelike into the hollows, fanged with wide mats of rusty barbed wire, and broken at close intervals by pustulous dugouts in whose gaping mouths flapped the rags of old blankets, emphasizing the new and utter desolation of a region so lately peopled by tens of thousands of toiling, struggling men. Fluttering camouflage nets along the roadsides, heaps of tin cans, deserted ammunition dumps on bypaths whose dust still showed the tracks of the *camions* and countless thousands of shell holes, many of them littered with the bones of men or animals exhumed by the explosion, confused the landscape, upon which the ghastly ruins of martyred villages, heaving up at wide intervals across the distant plain, painted the final splotch of horror to give character to a land whose long agony seemed the handiwork of Satan.

Owing to the open character of the country and to the fact that the parallel valleys of the Aisne, the Vesle, the Marne, the Aube, and the Seine, intersecting it, lead directly into Western France, the Champagne Pouilleuse is crossed

by the chief thoroughfares connecting Paris with the Rhine; not alone the railroads and highways but the canals as well, notably the Rhine-Marne Canal. The currents of human activity flowing through it have tended to make the country a battle ground through the centuries, and one admirably adapted to the maneuvering of armies. From the times when the Gallic tribes fought for their independence against Julius Caesar, through the barbaric invasions of the latter days of the Roman Empire, the Hundred Years' War and the wars of religion, great conflicts have occurred here at frequent intervals. On the eastern confines of the district, not 35 kilometers from Châlons-sur-Marne, behind those passes of the Argonne which Dumouriez denominated "the Thermopylae of France," the French Revolution was saved from destruction at the hands of the Prussians in the Battle of Valmy, September 20, 1792. In the region between Vitry and Château-Thierry, Troyes and Laon, Napoleon fought out the campaign of 1814 against confederated Europe.

But as we approach Châlons along the banks of the Marne, the very artery of the Champagne Pouilleuse, a name and the echoes of a tradition as strange and terrible as those of the stern old northern mythologies awaken in the mind. The name, indeed, is one which contributed not a little to those mythologies for it is that of Attila the Hun, "The Scourge of God;" and the echoes are those of the true "first Battle of the Marne," fought nearly fifteen centuries ago in the portion of the chalk plains still called the Catalaunian Fields, which extend northeastward from Châlons toward Valmy. There nascent France was rescued from barbarism to become a chief jewel of modern civilization and there was established for Germany and her kin the ill omen of Châlons, standing like a watch tower by the Marne, the verdure-walled moat of the

inner citadel of France. Northeast and north of Châlons by the best of roads, lie, at 14 kilometers, the Camp of Attila, where the great Hun came to bay after his terrible defeat on the Catalaunian Fields; at 35 kilometers, Valmy, where autocracy failed to quench the newly lighted torch of democracy in Europe; at 30 kilometers, Auberive, Souain, and Perthes-les-Hurlus, the nearest points of the Western Front of the World War, where Americans of the Forty-second Division shared honors with their French comrades in repulsing the last desperate offensive of the latter-day Huns, and at 40 kilometers, Medeah Farm and Blanc Mont and St. Étienne-a-Arnes, where still other Americans, of the Second Division, helped to tear loose that enemy's hands from their last hold on the intrenched lines before Reims and to hurl him back into open country. But, interesting though all of these places must henceforth be to Americans, the stories of none of them properly enter into a narrative of the Marne save that of the field of the contest between Attila's army and that of the Gallo-Romans. This epoch-marking struggle we will touch upon more fully after looking about Châlons.

CHAPTER XIII

CHÂLONS, KEEPER OF THE MIGHTY LEGEND

ENTERED through Compertrix and the Faubourg de Marne, on the west side of the river, the venerable city which the Romans knew as Catalaunum gives, owing to its flatness, a first impression of monotony. This is, however, somewhat relieved by the overtowering dimensions of the several churches which have made Châlons renowned for its ecclesiastical architecture. The more modern quarter west of the river, where the railroad yards are located, is given over to factories and particularly to breweries and champagne cellars and possesses few of the old landmarks save the remarkable former Manor of Jacquesson, with its two towers. This stately edifice is now used as a brewery and distillery and has connected with it no less than 7 miles of cellarage, hewn in the underlying chalk rock. Although the great center of the champagne industry, exceeding even Reims in importance, is at Epernay, some 35 kilometers west of Châlons, the wine trade of the latter is one of its most important activities and gives work to a considerable proportion of its 32,000 inhabitants.

Châlons, both in population and volume of commerce, is easily the most important city lying directly on the Marne and it is, moreover, the *chef-lieu,* or capital, of the Department of the Marne and a chief military center of France, containing the headquarters of the Sixth Corps and immense barracks for troops in the northeastern *faubourgs.* The Marne itself, viewed from the handsome Eighteenth-century bridge spanning it opposite to the center of the city, with its low banks and fringes of small trees and brush, has a common-

place appearance most unusual to the river of a thousand charming phases, though perhaps its very homeliness at Châlons may be counted, by contrast, as one of its charms. But the city which in the days of its greatest prosperity boasted a population twice as numerous as that of today; which twice during the Hundred Years' War, in 1430 and in 1434, repulsed the English invaders, and which was marvelously embellished with public works and buildings under the favor of King Henry IV and his successors of the sixteenth century, belies its poor promise as the visitor proceeds by the broad Rue de Marne past the imposing bulk of the City Hospital and the Cathedral of St. Étienne to the Place de Ville and the center of the city.

The Place de Ville, today still literally, though not practically, the heart of the city, is probably the same place in which the men of Châlons gathered to resist the attack of the English and the Navarrois one dark night in 1359; an affair of which Froissart gave such a lively description in his *Chronicles* that it is worth quoting as a picture both of the manner of fighting in those long-ago days of the Hundred Years' War and of the stoutness of heart which the burghers of Châlons, like those of other French towns, had to possess in order to preserve their independence. Froissart wrote:

> It happened that while Sir Peter Audley was governor of Beaufort (the English governor, the chronicler means), which is situated between Troyes and Châlons, he imagined that if he could cross the Marne above the town of Châlons and advance by the side of the monastery of St. Peter, he might easily take the town. To carry the scheme into effect he waited until the River Marne was low, when he secretly assembled his companions from five or six strong castles he was master of in that neighborhood. His army consisted of about four hundred combatants. They set out from Beaufort at midnight. He led them to a ford of the River Marne, which he intended to cross, for he had people of the country as guides. On

coming thither, he made them all to dismount and give their horses to the servants, when he marched them through the river, which was low. All having crossed, he led them slowly toward the monastery of St. Peter. There were many guards and watchmen scattered over the town of Châlons, and in the public squares; those who were nearest to the monastery of St. Peter, which is situated above the town, heard very distinctly the noise of the Navarrois, for, as they were advancing, their arms, by touching each other, made a noise and sounded. Many who heard this wondered what it could be; for all at once, Sir Peter having halted, the noise ceased, and when he continued his march the same sounds were again heard by the sentinels posted in St. Peter's street, as the wind came from the opposite quarter. And some among them said, "It must be those English and Navarrois thieves advancing to take us by escalade; let us immediately sound the alarm and awaken our fellow-citizens." Some of them went to the monastery, to see what it might be. They could not, however, make such speed but that Sir Peter and his army were in the courtyard; for the walls in that part were not four feet high; and they immediately rushed through the gate of the monastery into the street, which was large and wide. The citizens were exceedingly alarmed, because there arose cries from all parts of, "Treason! Treason! To arms! To arms!" They armed themselves in haste and, collecting in a body to be stronger, advanced to meet their enemies, who overthrew and killed the foremost of them.

It happened, very unfortunately for Châlons, that Peter de Châlons, who had been governor of the city upward of a year, with a hundred lances under his command had lately left it, on account of not being able to get paid according to their wishes. The commonalty of the city were numerous and set themselves in earnest to make a good defense. It was high time; but they suffered much and the Navarrois conquered all the lower town, as far as the bridges over the Marne. Beyond the bridges the citizens collected themselves and defended the first bridge, which was of great service to them. The skirmish was there very sharp; the Navarrois attacked and fought well. Some of the English archers advanced and, passing over the supports of the bridge, shot so well and so continually that none from Châlons dared to come within reach of their arrows.

This engagement lasted until midday. It was said by some that Châlons must have been taken if Sir Odes de Grancy had not learnt, as it were by inspiration, this incursion of the Navarrois. In order to defeat it he had entreated the assistance of many knights and squires, for he knew that there was not one gentleman in Châlons.

The Cathedral of St. Étienne at Châlons

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He had come, therefore, day and night, attended by Sir Philip de Jancourt, the Lord Anceau de Beaupre, the Lord John de Guermillon, and many others to the amount of sixty lances. As soon as they were come to Châlons they advanced toward the bridge, which the inhabitants were defending against the Navarrois, who were exerting themselves to the utmost to gain it. The Lord de Grancy displayed his banner and fell upon the Navarrois with a hearty good will. The arrival of the Lord de Grancy mightily rejoiced the people of Châlons; and well it might, for without him and his company they would have been hard driven. When Sir Peter Audley and his friends saw these Burgundians they retreated in good order the way they had come, and found their servants with their horses on the banks of the Marne. They mounted them and, crossing the river without molestation, returned toward Beaufort, having by a trifle missed their aim. The inhabitants of Châlons were much pleased at their departure and gave thanks to God for it. After expressing their obligations to the Lord de Grancy for the kindness he had done them, they presented him with five hundred livres for himself and his people. They entreated the Lord John de Besars, who was present and a near neighbor, to remain, to advise and assist them. He consented to their request, for the handsome salary they allowed him, and set about fortifying the city in those places which were the weakest.

It is evident that in those days the nobility were no more averse to turning an honest penny in the name of patriotism than are the war profiteers of the present.

No vestige survives in the Place de Ville of the buildings which the Lord de Grancy and Sir Peter Audley knew there but many historic structures of later date are still extant, lending dignity to the thoroughfares, while the stamp of military character is still upon the city in the sky-blue *camions* rolling by and the groups of officers and soldiers walking the streets or seated about the tables of the cafés. The martial throng is doubtless augmented by many soldiers from the great Camp of Châlons, 15 kilometers north of the city; the training and concentration center established by Napoleon III in 1856, from which, in 1870, the ill-fated Army of Châlons,

under Marshal MacMahon, set forth to its destruction at Sedan. At Vadenay Farm, St. Hilaire-le-Grand, which, as Father Duffy said, "does not look particularly saintly, nor hilarious, nor grand," and other places in the Camp of Châlons, the Forty-second American Division, after passing through Châlons, bivouacked on their way into the Auberive sector, where they helped to give to the Germans such a thorough beating on July 15, 1918.

To return to the Place de Ville, the most imposing building upon it is, appropriately enough, the Hôtel de Ville, a handsome edifice, with the usual Doric columns in the peristyle and four great lions crouching at the corners of the broad steps; "four enormous bow-wows in stone," Victor Hugo irreverently called them. The building was erected in 1772-6, replacing a structure of the Sixteenth century, said to have been much more beautiful, because the latter had become too small for its purposes. In front of the municipal building, a bust of President Carnot receiving honors from allegorical female figures in bronze commemorates the great review of 1891 at Matignicourt, previously mentioned. The Library and Museum are across the square, the former containing 1,100 manuscripts, a number of books printed before the year 1500, many rare prints and more than 100,000 modern volumes. The Museum houses antiquities, statuary, and paintings, among the latter being some by Holbein and Giotto, and a remarkable collection of images of Hindu gods, given by M. Eugene Lamairesse, a French engineer who resided during the sixties in the French establishments about Pondichery.

The actual center of Châlons, despite the importance of the Place de Ville, is in the Place de la Republique, lying a little farther to the north. A monumental fountain graces the broad paved expanse where circulate the slow currents of local busi-

ness, and around it are grouped many houses and store buildings interesting for their antiquity. Most curious of them is the four-story hotel, perhaps the best one in the city, called the Hôtel de la Haute-Mere-Dieu. It is so old that it was a house of refuge in the Twelfth century. Reputed to have been originally built of wood and plaster, it was remodeled in 1830, retaining, however, its name, which is believed to have been derived from a statuette of the Virgin formerly set upon its façade. Many a café along the Place de la Republique can furnish to the visitor the best of Châlons champagne and excellent beer of local manufacture, which does not go amiss before starting out on a walk through the Jard and the Jardin Anglais, whose shady promenades and handsome trees and flower beds border the canals and the Marne in the southwestern quarter of the city.

The Jard is more than a mere breathing place in a modern city. It has had a stirring part in many of the vital events of Châlons, from the days in 1147 when, within its precincts, St. Bernard preached the Second Crusade to the days in August, 1918, when General Gouraud there decorated the flags of 28 regiments which had participated with conspicuous valor in the repulse of the Germans on the Champagne front during the previous month. Particularly attractive in this region of parks is the short Canal de Nau, bordered with stately poplars and spanned by a tiny bridge, while a little farther on the graceful passerelle arches, like a Japanese wishing bridge over the chief lateral canal and gives access to the English Garden.

Two of the broad boulevards, called *allées,* laid out in modern days on the south side of the city, cross one another not far below the gardens; the Allées de Fôrets and the Allées Ste. Croix. Almost always animated by pedestrians and

pleasure vehicles, these handsomely parked boulevards pass the large auditorium, the Cirque, and the Allée Ste. Croix soon arrives at an impressive souvenir of bygone days, the Porte Ste. Croix. This massive triumphal archway, 60 feet in height, and imposing even though still unfinished after the lapse of one hundred and fifty years, was begun and nearly completed for the reception of Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria, on the occasion of her journey from Vienna to Paris in 1770 to become the bride of the French Dauphin, afterward King Louis XVI. A gateway of the fortifications called the Porte Ste. Croix was torn down and replaced by the present one, which was named at the time the Porte Dauphine. Its columns are adorned with heavily carved groups of military trophies but the inscriptions on the tablets erected in honor of the Austrian princess were all effaced during the Revolution, being repugnant to the eyes of the republicans, who, in addition to destroying them, restored its original name to the gateway. Under very different circumstances Marie Antoinette herself passed once more under the arch named in her honor when in June, 1791, she, with her royal husband, was brought back, a recaptured fugitive, from Varennes, to suffer imprisonment and death at the hands of the revolutionists.

Hard by the gateway of moving memories stands, half hidden among trees and with its venerable stonework etched by patches of moss, a fragment of the old fortifications, built in 1642. Preserved for the curious eyes of future generations the old Bastion Mauvillain, which formerly guarded the Marne entrance to the city, looks out upon modern gardens and residences like a grizzled hermit peering from his woodland sanctuary, curious but unmoved among the changes wrought by time. The bridge, a century older than the bastion, which

spans the slender stream of the Canal de Mau, near by, is of unusual construction, its single arch flaring out funnelwise to much greater dimensions at the edge of the masonry. Four heraldic escutcheons on the sides of the bridge have been almost obliterated by time and perhaps mutilation.

The Allée Ste. Croix, extending northeastward, passes near the stately building of the Prefecture of the Marne, where Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were warmly welcomed by the Châlonais of Royalist sympathies when they came back from Varennes, and where they lodged on June 22 and 23, 1791. Not far beyond we find ourselves in front of a building which is not only the most venerable, but also perhaps the loveliest of the city, the Church of St. Jean. It dates from the middle of the eleventh century, when the Romanesque nave was built and contains touches of all subsequent types of architecture prevalent from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The broad, low façade of the western, or main, entrance, with its hoary buttresses and flatly arched doorway surmounted by a similarly arched window reaching almost to the peak of the roof, is a work of the fourteenth century. The square tower above the transept is of the sixteenth century. A splendid balustrade of lacy stone carving surmounts the first chapel on the right of the façade. The interior is not less attractive, the transept and apse displaying the art of the thirteenth century, while a good many tombstones, still either resting in the floor or removed to the walls, recall to mind the names and virtues of personages who passed from earth long centuries ago.

St. Jean's, however, contains a less number of gravestones than the Church of St. Loup, on the Boulevard St. Jacques, whose square Gothic tower is visible from the former edifice across the exterior streets of the city. Among the parishes

of Châlons, that of St. Loup is the "infant," dating only from the year 1245, while the building itself, succeeding an earlier one, was begun in 1459. Though built when Gothic architecture was beginning to fall into decay, the purity of style of St. Loup's has caused it to be recognized as one of the very finest examples of Gothic art in northern France. This is particularly true of its interior, whose beauty and harmony of proportions are remarkable. Fine tiles, paintings, and sculptures, the work of many old masters, enrich both the body of the church and the chapels, while the floor of the nave is completely paved with curious tombstones of all epochs.

The extensive military quarters, hard by St. Loup's, include barracks for several regiments of infantry, artillery, and cavalry; drill grounds, hospitals, and many other facilities occupying a great extent of ground.

Returning toward the center of the city, past the buildings of the Army Headquarters and the Palais de Justice, one arrives, just back of the Hôtel de Ville, at the Church of Notre Dame, of which Victor Hugo said, writing during his journey to the Rhine in 1839:

I found what I did not expect — that is, a very pretty Notre Dame at Châlons. What have the antiquaries been thinking of when, speaking of St. Étienne, they never breathed a word about Notre Dame? The Notre Dame of Châlons is a Roman church, with arched roofs and a superb spire, bearing the date of the fourteenth century. In the middle is a lantern crowned with small pinions. A beautiful *coup d'oeil* is afforded here (a pleasure which I enjoyed) of the town, the Marne and the surrounding hills. The traveler may also admire the splendid windows of Notre Dame, and a rich *portail* of the thirteenth century. In 1793 the people of this place broke the windows and pulled down the statues; they also destroyed the lateral gateway of the cathedral, and all the sculpture that was within their reach. Notre Dame had four spires, three of which are demolished, testifying the height of stupidity, which is nowhere so evident as here. The French Revolution was a terrible one; the revolution Champenoise was attended with acts of the greatest folly.

In an earlier paragraph of the same letter, the author of *The Rhine* referred to the Cathedral of St. Étienne, easily the show building of Châlons, which we encounter on again traversing the street leading from the Hôtel de Ville to the Marne, in the following unflattering words:

> The exterior of the cathedral is noble, and there are still remains of some rich stained glass — a rose window especially. I saw in the church a charming chapel of the Renaissance, with the F and the salamander. Outside the church there is a Roman tower in the severest and purest style, and a delicious portal, of the fourteenth century. But the dilapidations are hideous. The church is filthy; the sculptures of Francis I are covered with yellow paint, and the graining is daubed over also. The façade is a poor imitation of our facade of St. Germain; but the spires! I had been promised open-worked steeples. I counted on these steeples. I found two; but they had heavy pointed caps of stone — open-worked, if you please, and original enough for that matter, but heavily moulded, and with volutes intermingled with ogives! I went away terribly disappointed.

The "dilapidations" and filth referred to by Victor Hugo are not so obvious today, the great church having been well restored, while an increasing respect for things spiritual and venerable has accomplished cleanliness. Begun in the thirteenth century and not really completed for three hundred years, its appearance suffered by finally receiving upon its Gothic bulk a classic façade of the sixteenth century. But, as is pointed out by Elise Whitlock Rose in *Cathedrals and Cloisters of Northern France;*

> The treasure of Châlons is its pointed interior — the nave with its rows of white, round pillars and narrow, foliated capitals, "the transparent gallery" of an ornate and handsome triforium, the high clerestory, and a vaulting which is an example of good rebuilding. In the choir, the triforium is enclosed by solid masonry, and the capitals and abaci are almost severe, but the general conception is fine; and the three apsidal windows, like a few in the aisles and in the north transept, contain remarkable stained glass.

Many tales centering about the cathedral have come down through the years, one of the most touching being that of Margaret, daughter of James I of Scotland and wife of the Dauphin, Louis, afterward Louis XI. Of a gentle and poetical disposition, she had been married in infancy to the turbulent and headstrong prince, who detested her sensitive nature and made her supremely unhappy. On the occasion of a visit to Châlons she fell ill and, finding that her end was approaching, she asked to be taken from the château to the quiet cloisters of the cathedral. Here her confessor conjured her to forgive all those who had wronged her. After a long silence the poor, dying girl, who had known only twenty years of life, replied, turning her face to the wall: "I forgive. Fie upon existence! Do not speak to me of it."

At the season of Easter during the Middle Ages, the old cathedral used to see enacted the story of that joyous Christian festival with elaborate pomp and verisimilitude to the Gospel narratives. The Angels of the Sepulchre, the three Marys, and all the other actors in the divine drama took their parts in speech and action in the white aisles which have long since become unaccustomed to such naive and realistic interpretations of the foundation stories of our faith. It is the mighty bulk of this storied cathedral, looming above the lesser roofs around it, which overtowers Châlons as one leaves it behind and resumes his journey down the Marne, and well it seems to embody and typify the solidity of the noble town and the grandeur of the part which it has played in the long drama of French history.

It may be added that in September, 1914, Châlons suffered fire from the German artillery, which broke some of the old stained glass in St. Étienne's and crushed in the roof of the children's ward in the Hospital, which, providentially,

was empty at the time. This occurred on the fourth of the month, before the Saxon troops of von Hausen's Third Army entered the streets. A ransom of 500,000 francs was collected from the city by the invaders before their precipitate departure on the night of September 11. Thereafter at intervals throughout the war the enemy indulged his passion for indiscriminate destruction and terrorism by bombing the city from Zeppelins and airplanes and bombarding it with long-range guns, thereby compassing the death of a few noncombatants and the demolition of a few houses. But for the greatest event of world history with which the name of Châlons is forever linked, we must go back to the invasion of the first Huns under Attila, who preceded those under von Hausen by fifteen hundred years.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SCOURGE OF GOD

FIFTEEN kilometers northeast of Châlons and about half that distance from the exquisite pilgrimage Abbey of Notre Dame de l'Epine, there lies within a bend of the tiny river, Noblette, an immense circular rampart, overlooking the low, sloping roofs of the hamlet of La Cheppe and enclosing a level space 40 or 50 acres in extent. Standing upon its turf-grown crest one looks down upon the interior from a height of about 20 feet but upon the exterior side he views a surrounding ditch whose bottom, from which large trees shoot up, is 40 or more feet below him. In 1919 the interior of this earthwork, which is not more than 15 kilometers behind the forward trenches of the Champagne front, was littered with the débris of a huge French artillery ammunition dump, the giant projectiles of long-range guns being scattered in particular abundance over the ground.

This spot is the one famed in local tradition as the "Camp of Attila." The vast circular walls of earth, almost as high as the ramparts of Paris, which the storms of fifteen centuries have not diminished, are believed to be the work of the multitudinous hands of the Hunnish Army which had swept Europe from the Danube to the Loire until checked at Orleans by the Gallo-Roman forces of the Roman general, Aetius, and Theodoric, King of the Visigoths. Nor, in the opinion of Sir Edward S. Creasy, the most eminent English authority on that momentous campaign and battle,

> . . . . is there any reason to question the correctness of the title, or to doubt that behind these very ramparts it was that, fourteen hundred years ago, the most powerful heathen king that ever ruled

in Europe, mustered the remnants of his vast army which had striven on these plains against the Christian soldiery of Toulouse and Rome. Here it was that Attila prepared to resist to the death his victors in the field; and here he heaped up the treasures of his camp in one vast pile, which was to be his funeral pyre should his camp be stormed. It was here that the Gothic and Italian forces watched, but dared not assail, their enemy in his despair, after that great and terrible day of battle.

Creasy does not presume definitely to locate the field of the struggle which had brought the Huns to such a pass. But, though authorities differ on this point, some contending that the battle probably occurred in that portion of the Champagne Pouilleuse lying southwest of the Marne, between Châlons and Troyes, it seems far more logical to suppose that it occurred northeast of Châlons, between that city and the Noblette. Having already learned respect for his foes on the Loire, so good a general as Attila would hardly have offered decisive battle on a field where he would have a large river behind him, which, in case of his defeat, would complete his ruin. Nor, if he had fought on such a field and succeeded in passing his beaten host over the Marne afterward, would he have been likely to throw away the opportunity of making his later defensive stand behind the Marne itself rather than behind the little Noblette. The fact appears to be that, having already passed the Marne before the battle, he utilized the Noblette afterward as the nearest good defensive position available, so locating his camp as to make the stream serve the purpose of a natural wet ditch in front of it, as is quite obvious from even a moment's study of the site.

It would be presumptuous for anyone to attempt to improve upon the polished English of Sir Edward Creasy's description of the battle of Châlons in his classic *Fifteen*

Decisive Battles of the World, or to add matter of value to his keen and incisive observations. The present writer will therefore confine himself to the quotation of a few of the more immediately relevant paragraphs of the English historian upon the significance and the actual events of "the first battle of the Marne."

The victory, which the Roman general Aetius, with his Gothic allies, had then gained over the Huns was the last victory of Imperial Rome. But among the long Fasti of her triumphs few can be found that, for their importance and ultimate benefit to mankind, are comparable with this expiring effort of her arms. It did not, indeed, open to her any new career of conquest; it did not consolidate the relics of her power; it did not turn the rapid ebb of her fortunes. The mission of Imperial Rome was, in truth, already accomplished. She had received and transmitted through her once ample dominion the civilization of Greece. She had broken up the barriers of narrow nationalities among the various states and tribes that dwelt around the coast of the Mediterranean. She had fused these and many other races into one organized empire, bound together by a community of laws, of government and institutions. Under the shelter of her full power the True Faith had arisen in the earth, and during the years of her decline it had been nourished to maturity, and had overspread all the provinces that ever obeyed her sway. For no beneficial purpose to mankind could the dominion of the seven-hilled city have been restored or prolonged. But it was all important to mankind what nations should divide among them Rome's rich inheritance of empire; whether the Germanic and Gothic warriors should form states and kingdoms out of the fragments of her dominions, and become the free members of the commonwealth of Christian Europe; or whether pagan savages from the wilds of Central Asia should crush the relics of classic civilization and the early institutions of the Christianized Germans, in one hopeless chaos of barbaric conquest. The Christian Visigoths of King Theodoric fought and triumphed at Châlons side by side with the legions of Aetius. Their joint victory over the Hunnish host not only rescued for a time from destruction the old age of Rome, but preserved for centuries of power and glory the Germanic element in the civilization of modern Europe. . . . .

By the middle of the fifth century, Germanic nations had set-

tled themselves in many of the fairest regions of the Roman Empire, had imposed their yoke on the provincials, and had undergone, to a considerable extent, that moral conquest which the arts and refinements of the vanquished in arms have so often achieved over the rough victor. The Visigoths held the north of Spain and Gaul south of the Loire. Franks, Alemanni, Alans, and Burgundians had established themselves in other Gallic provinces, and the Suevi were masters of a large southern portion of the Spanish peninsula. A king of the Vandals reigned in North Africa, and the Ostrogoths had firmly planted themselves in the provinces north of Italy. Of these powers and principalities, that of the Visigoths, under their king Theodoric, son of Alaric, was by far the first in power and in civilization.

The pressure of the Huns upon Europe had first been felt in the fourth century of our era. They had long been formidable to the Chinese Empire; but the ascendancy in arms which another nomadic tribe of Central Asia, the Sienpi, gained over them, drove the Huns from their Chinese conquests westward; and this movement once being communicated to the whole chain of barbaric nations that dwelt northward of the Black Sea and the Roman Empire, tribe after tribe of savage warriors broke in upon the barriers of civilized Europe, *velut unda supervenit undam.* The Huns crossed the Tanais into Europe in 375, and rapidly reduced to subjection the Alans, the Ostrogoths, and other tribes that were then dwelling along the course of the Danube. The armies of the Roman emperor that tried to check their progress, were cut to pieces by them; and Pannonia and other provinces south of the Danube were speedily occupied by the victorious cavalry of these new invaders. Not merely the degenerate Romans, but the bold and hardy warriors of Germany and Scandinavia were appalled at the numbers, the ferocity, the ghastly appearance, and the lightning-like rapidity of the Huns. Strange and loathsome legends were coined and credited which attributed their origin to the union of

Secret, black, and midnight hags

with the evil spirits of the wilderness.

Tribe after tribe, and city after city, fell before them. Then came a pause in their career of conquest in southwestern Europe, caused probably by dissensions among their chiefs, and also by their arms being employed in attacks upon the Scandinavian nations. But when Attila (or Atzel, as he is called in the Hunga-

rian language) became their ruler, the torrent of their arms was directed with augmented terrors upon the west and the south; and their myriads marched beneath the guidance of one master-mind to the overthrow both of the new and the old powers of the earth. . . . .

The year 445 of our era completed the twelfth century from the foundation of Rome, according to the best chronologers. It had always been believed among the Romans that the twelve vultures, which were said to have appeared to Romulus when he founded the city, signified the time during which the Roman power should endure. The twelve vultures denoted twelve centuries. This interpretation of the vision of the birds of destiny was current among learned Romans, even when there were yet many of the twelve centuries to run, and while the Imperial city was at the zenith of its power. But as the allotted time drew nearer and nearer to its conclusion, and as Rome grew weaker and weaker beneath the blows of barbaric invaders, the terrible omen was more and more talked and thought of; and in Attila's time men watched for the momentary extinction of the Roman State with the last beat of the last vulture's wing. Moreover, among the numerous legends connected with the foundation of the city, and the fratricidal death of Remus, there was one most terrible one which told that Romulus did not put his brother to death in accident, or in hasty quarrel, but that

He slew his gallant twin
With inexpiable sin,

deliberately, and in compliance with the warnings of supernatural powers. The shedding of a brother's blood was believed to have been the price at which the founder of Rome had purchased from destiny her twelve centuries of existence.

We may imagine, therefore, with what terror in this, the twelve-hundredth year after the foundation of Rome, the inhabitants of the Roman Empire must have heard the tidings that the royal brethren, Attila and Bleda, had founded a new capital on the Danube, which was designed to rule over the ancient capital on the Tiber; and that Attila, like Romulus, had consecrated the foundation of his new city by murdering his brother; so that, for the new cycle of centuries then about to commence, dominion had been bought from the gloomy spirits of destiny in favor of the Hun by a sacrifice of equal awe and value with that which had formerly obtained it for the Roman. . . . .

Two chiefs of the Franks, who were then settled on the Lower Rhine, were at this period engaged in a feud with each other; and while one of them appealed to the Romans for aid, the other invoked the assistance and protection of the Huns. Attila thus obtained an ally whose cooperation secured for him the passage of the Rhine; and it was this circumstance which caused him to take a northward route from Hungary for his attack upon Gaul. The muster of the Hunnish hosts was swollen by warriors of every tribe that they had subjugated; nor is there any reason to suspect the old chroniclers of wilful exaggeration in estimating Attila's army at seven hundred thousand strong. Having crossed the Rhine, probably a little below Coblentz, he defeated the king of the Burgundians, who endeavored to bar his progress. He then divided his vast forces into two armies — one of which marched northwest upon Tongres and Arras and the other cities of that part of France; while the main body under Attila himself, marched up the Moselle and destroyed Besançon and other towns in the country of the Burgundians. One of the latest and best biographers of Attila well observes that, "having thus conquered the eastern part of France, Attila prepared for an invasion of the West Gothic territories beyond the Loire. He marched upon Orleans, where he intended to force the passage of that river; and only a little attention is requisite to enable us to perceive that he proceeded on a systematic plan; he had his right wing on the north, for the protection of his Frank allies; his left wing on the south, for the purpose of preventing the Burgundians from rallying, and of menacing the passes of the Alps from Italy; and he led his center towards the chief object of the campaign — the conquest of Orleans, and an easy passage into the West Gothic dominion. The whole plan is very like that of the allied powers in 1814, with this difference, that their left wing entered France through the defiles of the Jura, in the direction of Lyons, and that the military object of the campaign was the capture of Paris."

It was not until the year 451 that the Huns commenced the siege of Orleans; and during their campaign in Eastern Gaul, the Roman general Aetius had strenuously exerted himself in collecting and organizing such an army as might, when united to the soldiery of the Visigoths, be fit to face the Huns in the field. He enlisted every subject of the Roman Empire whom courage, patriotism, or compulsion could collect beneath the standards; and round these troops, which assumed the once proud title of the legions

of Rome, he arrayed the large forces of barbaric auxiliaries whom pay, persuasion, or the general hate and dread of the Huns, brought to the camp of the last of the Roman generals. King Theodoric exerted himself with equal energy. Orleans resisted her besiegers bravely as in after-times. The passage of the Loire was skilfully defended against the Huns; and Aetius and Theodoric, after much maneuvering and difficulty, effected a junction of their armies to the south of that important river.

Upon the advance of the allies on Orleans, Attila instantly broke up the siege of that city, and retreated towards the Marne. He did not choose to risk a decisive battle with only the central corps of his army against the combined power of his enemies; and he therefore fell back upon his base of operations, calling in his wings from Arras and Besançon, and concentrating the whole of the Hunnish forces on the vast plains of Châlons-sur-Marne. A glance at the map will show how scientifically this place was chosen by the Hunnish general as the point for his scattered forces to converge upon; and the nature of the ground was eminently favorable for the operations of cavalry, the arm in which Attila's strength peculiarly lay.

It was during the retreat from Orleans that a Christian hermit is reported to have approached the Hunnish king and said to him, "Thou art the Scourge of God for the chastisement of Christians." Attila instantly assumed this new title of terror, which thenceforth became the appellation by which he was most widely and most fearfully known.

The confederate armies of Romans and Visigoths at last met their great adversary face to face on the ample battleground of the Châlons plains. Aetius commanded on the right of the allies; King Theodoric on the left; and Sangipan, king of the Alans, whose fidelity was suspected, was placed purposely in the center, and in the very front of the battle. Attila commanded his center in person, at the head of his own countrymen, while the Ostrogoths, the Gepidae, and the other subject allies of the Huns were drawn up on the wings. Some maneuvering appears to have occurred before the engagement in which Aetius had the advantage, inasmuch as he succeeded in occupying a sloping hill which commanded the left flank of the Huns. Attila saw the importance of the position taken by Aetius on the high ground and commenced the battle by a furious attack on this part of the Roman lines, in which he seems to have detached some of his best troops from his center to

aid his left. The Romans, having the advantage of the ground, repulsed the Huns, and while the allies gained this advantage on their right, their left, under King Theodoric, assailed the Ostrogoths, who formed the right of Attila's army. The gallant king was himself struck down by a javelin, as he rode onward at the head of his men, and his own cavalry charging over him trampled him to death in the confusion. But the Visigoths, infuriated, not dispirited, by their monarch's fall, routed the enemies opposed to them, and then wheeled upon the flank of the Hunnish center, which had been engaged in a sanguinary and indecisive contest with the Alans.

In this peril Attila made his center fall back upon his camp; and when the shelter of its intrenchments and wagons had once been gained, the Hunnish archers repulsed, without difficulty, the charges of the vengeful Gothic cavalry. Aetius had not pressed the advantage which he gained on his side of the field and when night fell over the wild scene of havoc, Attila's left was still unbroken, but his right had been routed, and his center forced back upon his camp.

Expecting an assault on the morrow, Attila stationed his best archers in front of the cars and wagons, which were drawn up as a fortification along his lines, and made every preparation for a desperate resistance. But the "Scourge of God" resolved that no man should boast of the honor of having either captured or slain him; and he caused to be raised in the center of his encampment a huge pyramid of the wooden saddles of his cavalry; round it he heaped the spoils and the wealth that he had won; on it he stationed his wives who had accompanied him in the campaign; and on the summit he placed himself, ready to perish in the flames, and balk the victorious foe of their choicest booty, should they succeed in storming his defenses.

But when the morning broke, and revealed the extent of the carnage, with which the plains were heaped for miles, the successful allies saw also and respected the resolute attitude of their antagonist. Neither were any measures taken to blockade him in his camp, and so to extort by famine that submission which it was too plainly perilous to enforce with the sword. Attila was allowed to march back the remnants of his army without molestation, and even with the semblance of success.

It is probable that the crafty Aetius was unwilling to be too victorious. He dreaded the glory which his allies, the Visigoths, had acquired; and feared that Rome might find a second Alaric

in Prince Thorismuhd, who had signalized himself in the battle, and had been chosen on the field to succeed his father, Theodoric. He persuaded the young king to return at once to his capital; and thus relieved himself at the same time of the presence of a dangerous friend, as well as of a formidable, though beaten, foe.

Attila's attacks on the Western Empire were soon renewed; but never with such peril to the civilized world as had menaced it before his defeat at Châlons. And on his death, two years after that battle, the vast empire which his genius had founded was soon dissevered by the successful revolts of the subject nations. The name of the Huns ceased for some centuries to inspire terror in Western Europe, and their ascendancy passed away with the life of the great king, by whom it had been so fearfully augmented.

CHAPTER XV

THE LIQUID GOLD OF CHAMPAGNE

AS FROM Vitry to Châlons, so from Châlons to Epernay, another 30 kilometers, the land unfolds in vast, level reaches of peaceful fields and woodlands; of pastures dyed with bluets and poppies, where cattle and sheep graze in long grasses; of meadows where the hay-makers are tossing the conical cocks upon the waiting wains; of yellowing grain fields over which fly, cawing, the slow-winged rooks; of village spires rising in the distance beside the white roads. Through it all the Marne threads its vagrant, dimpling pathway of silver, reflecting the blue sky and fleecy clouds and the lacelike tracery of the trees that bend tenderly above it; laughing over shallows, slipping silently through shady pools as if tiptoeing past the drowsy fishermen who sit reposefully, rod in hand, in such seductive spots, and gliding with dainty tread and a soft whisper of waters like the swish of a maiden's skirt, between the white piers of overarching bridges.

Not a few of these bridges, formerly graceful with all the grace characteristic of French stonework, were reduced to uncouth heaps of ruin when the Germans swept with fire and sword over the land in the fall of 1914, and across the mutilated stumps of their abutments army engineers have since thrown sturdy but commonplace spans of steel. This is the case at Matougues, a rambling little lowland village wherein thatched roofs and tile vie with each other in sheltering the squat old houses, and past which the river flows with more than its accustomed speed and strength. It is the case again a little way farther on, at the next village, Aul-

nay, where the Marne nearly loses itself in wandering about among flats and islands rank with marsh grasses as it creeps beneath a once massive, two-span bridge now overleaped by a thin roadway of steel as straight and rigid as a crusader's sword.

Fortunately these pretty, isolated villages escaped much other damage during the brief sojourn of the invaders. The low, Romanesque church of Matougues, with the neat graveyard and high stone wall around it, is intact. And at Jalons-les-Vignes, which keeps guard over the spot where the Somme-Soude steals from its marshes into the Marne, a still more beautiful church remains as it was before the war. The pure Roman steeple and cloistered porch and the delicate modeling of the ribs and the capitals of the columns in its interior, all deeply touched by the mellowing tints of time, have united to give to the church of Jalons more than a local reputation for modest loveliness.

A short distance up the Somme-Soude, in the wide marshlands which lie above Jalons, is one of the most interesting spots to nature lovers to be found anywhere, the ancient heronry called the Grand-Ecury. A refuge and nesting-place for these stately aquatic birds since a time so remote that its origin has been forgotten, the Grand-Ecury is owned and protected by the owner of the Château of St. Georges, four kilometers south of Jalons. The château itself, built of alternate courses of bricks and white stone, which, with its pointed roofs and towers, uplifts itself prettily amid the surrounding woods, is worthy of a visit. But the prime object of interest is the great surrounding park, whose noble trees are the habitations of thousands of herons from February until August of each year.

The nests of the herons, built of twigs and reeds and

mud, are sometimes as much as three feet in diameter, resembling clusters of mistletoe, and they are scattered in profusion among the high tops of the oaks, poplars, ash, and willow trees which attain to great size in the moist soil. During the hatching season, to protect the eggs from the ravens and squirrels, those persistent nest robbers, one or other of the parent herons generally remains on the nest while the other seeks for food, so that the colony is always alive with birds. Local tradition has it that the Grand-Ecury, one of only three such refuges in France, was first established by one Count of Sainte-Suzanne to rid the sursounding country of a plague of vipers, of which the heron is the inveterate foe; at all events, vipers are today conspicuous only by their absence in the vicinity of these marshes.

Already, as one pursues his way beside the flashing links of the Marne, he has seen, growing gradually more distinct in the wide, blue distance before him, the low hills of Avize and Vertus reaching away to the southwest and the higher escarpments of the Mountain of Reims stretching along the northwestern horizon above Mareuil and Ay and Epernay, their summits crowned with dark forests, their slopes verdant with the vineyards which are the most renowned and the most valuable in the world. For we are now approaching that limited district of ancient Champagne which has made the name of the whole widespread province familiar to mankind everywhere, and whose wine of liquid gold,

quick,
As the wit it gives, the gay champagne,

is, in the opinion of Mr. Henry James, as well as of many others who could not express themselves so felicitously, the most agreeable of all the delightful gifts of France to the

world. In this joyous land it seems that the Marne, casting aside the demure sobriety with which it has thus far pursued its journey through life, dances like a nymph of Bacchus for a while between the hillsides which are a riot of vines, past Mareuil, Ay, Dizy, Epernay, Hautevillers, Pierry, Damery, and Binson, before it begins to grow sedate once more under the reproving glance of Pope Urban II, above Châtillon, and becomes quite staid again about Dormans. Other famous vineyards and wine centers lie a little back from the river; Reims, 22 kilometers north of Epernay, with Verzy, Sillery, and Chamery on the northern slopes of the mountain facing it; Vertus, Avize, Cramant, and Moussy on the slopes and in the folds of the hills south of the river. But we must confine our attention, as the present writer was obliged to do, to a glimpse of the vine culture and wine making as exemplified in the places which the Marne's own waters reflect.

Mareuil-sur-Ay, hugging the canal and the river, with the abrupt rise of its rounded hill, completely robed in vines, behind it, is the first of such places, and literally the entrance to the vine country, for here the hills for the first time draw near together below the great valley which commenced above Châlons. An appropriate entrance it is, too, for as one stands on the river bank opposite Mareuil and looks northward, the outline of the hill behind the village, coupled to its own reflection in the water, forms the exact image of an enormous champagne bottle lying upon its side; the slope of the hill drawing the taper toward the neck, while a group of trees, just properly placed, shapes the cork. The place is called *La Bouteille.*

Ay, 2 or 3 kilometers down river, is the first town of any size connected with the industry of the valley. A beautiful

avenue, named after Victor Hugo, bordered by four rows of great trees, leads from the railway station and the port of the canal into the town, which is further surrounded by a broad boulevard on the site of the long-vanished fifteenth century fortifications. But though the town of 5,000 people shows every evidence of prosperity in its comfortable residences and various factories of articles employed in the wine industry, such as bottles and packing cases, it has not much of interest to show to the visitor and is too closely connected with Epernay, both physically and in a commercial sense, to be, in reality, more than a suburb of that city.

If one follows the broad highway, or, rather, street, marked by the tram line from Ay, he enters Epernay through the suburb of Magenta. But the higher ground on the south side of the Marne, where the road comes in from Châlons and Jalons, affords the more extensive and beautiful view of the city as one approaches it. At one's feet the sparkling Marne, tinted by the blue sky, flashes between the curving arches of the highway bridge, turned in perfect ovals by their own reflections in the stream. Distant roadways, outlined by tapering poplars and hemmed by green and golden fields of crops, form a tapestried setting for the gem of the distant city, whose spires and ornate roofs are etched against the slopes of the Mountain of Reims, royally robed in the emerald velvet of the vineyards.

Although then as now the vineyards surrounded the Epernay of the fifteenth century, there is nothing else today to faintly suggest the appearance of that medieval strong place, straitly confined within its battlemented walls, the spires of two churches, as shown in the old prints, dominating it. One of these churches is now quite vanished; the other, Notre Dame, shows only, of former features, the façade and some

stained-glass windows. Indeed, the whole city has been transformed by the amazing modern success of its industry, becoming as long ago as 1839, when Victor Hugo visited it, "the town for champagne — nothing more, nothing less," which he then found. Everything attests the truth of the novelist's dictum, from the luxurious, but frequently too ostentatious, homes of the wine kings, such as the palatial Château de Pekin, on the slopes of Mont Bernon, southeast of the city, and others only less gorgeous in the same quarter, to the tall chimneys and spreading roofs of the manufactories of bottles, stoppers, and packing cases, and machinery for rinsing, filling, corking, and dosing bottles. There are, to be sure, other industrial plants; large breweries, factories of hats and millinery and, on the shores of the Marne near where the little Cubry brook falls into it, extensive shops of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est. But all the plants last mentioned are insignificant compared with those of the forty-odd manufacturers and wholesalers of wine in Epernay, and the auxiliary industries connected with them.

Even the extensive surface buildings of the wine industry do not truly gauge its magnitude, for the chalky soil beneath the city and that of the hills around it is honeycombed with many miles of cellars and subterranean galleries, where by far the greater part of the fabrication of champagne is carried on and where all of the finished product is kept in storage until it is shipped away. Some idea of the extent of these cellars may be gleaned from the statement of Victor Hugo, made more than eighty years ago, that while in Epernay he was urged to visit the show place of the town, a cellar containing 1,500,000 bottles of champagne. He made a well-intentioned start to do so, but on the way thither passed a turnip field wherein poppies were blowing and butterflies

sporting in the sunshine. The poet paused to enjoy these simple beauties and never saw the cave. The latter still exists, even larger than it was when Hugo was there, and there are others as extensive.

During the battle of the Meuse-Argonne, a delightful young French officer who was stationed at the headquarters of the First American Army but who, in civil life, was president of one of the great champagne companies, informed the writer that the cellars of his company, under the Mountain of Reims, contained, at the beginning of the war, 2,000,000 bottles of champagne. During the four years of the struggle the galleries were thrown open for the use of troops withdrawn for rest from the sectors of the front lying in the vicinity of Reims. No restrictions, save such as might be imposed by their officers, were placed upon the soldiers regarding the use of the stored wines. The young officer, while laughingly admitting that the contents of about 800,000 bottles had thus far gone down the throats of French soldiers to brighten their sojourn beneath the mountain, declared himself and his company well satisfied with this drain upon their stock in view of the fact that but for the presence and the bravery of the French troops, the entire contents of the cellars would long before have been consumed or destroyed by the Germans. During the few days in the fall of 1914 in which the invaders held Reims and Epernay, they put forth their best efforts but could make only slight inroads on the enormous wine stocks. But even such inroads had rather disastrous consequences for them, as has been amusingly pointed out by Edmond Pilon in his little volume, *Sous l'Egide de la Marne.* He writes:

In 1914, the German hordes progressed rapidly to the land of the vineyards. But, accustomed until then to their Bavarian beer,

thick and nourishing, they were overcome by the vivacity of the rare vintages. Their wits befogged, their heads on fire, after some libations they reeled. It was General Foch himself, after the ceremony at Fére-Champenoise, who related to his hosts, the plan of the Battle of the Marne in his hand, how, two years before, on entering the Château of Mondement with General Humbert, they scrambled over piles of empty champagne bottles (left by the retreating enemy), which lay there, broken, in heaps.

Some of the wine cellars, during their many decades of use, have become veritable art galleries by reason of paintings or sculptures placed there by artists more or less famous, who have thus attested their admiration for the supreme "cup that cheers." Particularly striking among these works of art is an eighteenth-century bas-relief in one of the caves, portraying with admirable spirit a sumptuous banquet hall around whose table a throng of ladies and gentlemen are sitting or standing with wine goblets upraised in response to a young man who stands, with all the vivacity of life, on a chair with one foot on the table, proposing a toast. But it is in Epernay itself, in the Hôtel de Ville, that one sees perhaps the most distinguished work of this type, a painting by Armand Guery. Upon a large canvas appear the swelling slopes of the Mountain of Reims, clothed with the vines of folly, while beneath this attractive scene from nature is gracefully materialized the cellar of the good Dom Perignon, to whom tradition ascribes the honor of having discovered the process of making champagne.

The story goes that the Dom Perignon was a monk of the Abbey of Hautevillers on the slope of the mountain opposite to Epernay, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. So skilled was he in vine culture and the preparation of wines that he was reputed to be able to tell, by tasting a single grape, from what soil and what vicinity it had come. Hav-

ing heard something of the use of cork for stopping bottles, he procured some and experimented with it in a few of his own wine bottles, in place of the plugs of hemp saturated in oil which were universally used at that period. The corks confined in the bottles the carbonic acid gas which theretofore had slowly escaped through the hemp, so that when the Dom Perignon opened one of his experimental bottles he was amazed to see pour from it the white foam, or "mousse," which differentiates champagne from still wines. By further experiments, the monk was soon able to demonstrate the superior excellence of the new product, and he himself so improved the process of producing it that when he died in 1715 it was with the satisfying knowledge that his discovery was meeting with ever-increasing appreciation.

Out on the wide hillsides about Epernay, with the peaceful valley of the Marne far below, one may study at leisure the beginning of the long and intricate process of champagne-making. The rare combination of soil and climate necessary to the growth of the proper varieties of red and white grapes, possessing, moreover, the proper flavor, have made the slopes of these hillsides so valuable that every available foot of them is utilized, even though it be necessary to elaborately terrace large parts of them. Here, throughout the year work goes on in the vineyards; fertilizing and preparing the soil, planting the vines, setting the wooden stakes, or vine props, which, early in the year before the leaves have covered them, so curiously mark the slopes with their gray, bristling multitudes; hoeing, weeding, pruning, spraying; all these activities have their time and season.

The gathering of the ripe grapes usually begins in the first week of October and then an army of men, women, and children who come in from far and near, are engaged

in the task. The grapes have to be gathered with the utmost care, no spoiled or unripe ones being permitted to go to the presses. From the presses the young wine is drawn into casks in the great cellars and remains there, fermenting, until winter, when it receives the first racking to remove the crude sediment. The second racking takes place a month later and then the wine is fined of all impurities and bottled in certain proportions of the various growths with an admixture of old wine. If not sufficiently sweet, enough candied sugar is added to produce fermentation in the bottle.

Throughout the following summer the bottles lie, corked and clipped, horizontally in racks while the carbonic acid gas is generated and the sediment falls to the side of the bottle. Later they are set in other racks, neck downward and inclined at an angle of about seventy degrees. For a month or six weeks they are then daily shaken very slightly and the angle of inclination gradually increased to loosen the sediment and cause it to settle upon the cork. When this has been accomplished, the clip is removed and the cork flies out, "degourging" the bottle by taking the sediment out with it. The bottles are then "dosed," or liqueured by being filled up with a mixture of old wine, cognac, and sugar, the amount of liqueur added depending upon the climate of the country to which the bottles are to be shipped, those destined to cold countries receiving a higher percentage of liqueur than those destined for warm ones. They are then recorked, wired, wrapped, and packed ready for shipment. Before the war about 5,000,000 bottles of champagne were being laid down annually in the whole champagne district and there was an enormous reserve supply on hand, in storage; perhaps between 80,000,000 and 100,000,000 bottles.

In the growing season the hills of the champagne country

Men, women and children gather the ripe grapes

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are beautiful and interesting, both as viewed from a distance and on closer inspection. Fine, white roads wind up the slopes, closely bordered by the vines, which, though trimmed and trained too rigidly to have much individual grace, yet collectively weave a lovely carpet over the rising ground, while above them thriving forests occupy the higher levels of the hills, where grapes possessing the proper qualities cannot be grown.

The writer visited the vineyards on the southern slopes of the Mountain of Reims on a summer day of mist and occasional showers, when the vines and grape clusters hung heavy and glistening with rain drops and when, far below, the Marne wound like a gray ribbon through the valley with the varicolored walls and roofs of Epernay, beside it, softened to dull tones in the humid air. A short distance down the river, at the foot of the hill of Hautevillers, the straight trench of the canal, which had marched side by side with the river ever since the two entered the shadow of the battlemented height of Langres, could be seen discharging into the Marne, which thenceforward until its own entry into the Seine at Charenton is itself canalized and carries the burdens of commerce. The habitually cheerful appearance of the country was sobered to a quality of sadness and the fact that even this land, associated in all minds with light-hearted joy, has borne its share of the nation's sorrows was brought sharply to mind as we ascended the road leading across the Mountain to Reims. At the moment when we first glimpsed, near the crest, the roofs of Champillon, we noticed, also, beside us in the midst of the vineyards a small wooden obelisk painted white and decorated with wreaths and little tricolor flags. It was evidently a temporary monument to be replaced later by one more substantial and on its

face it bore a tablet inscribed with twenty or more names of soldiers *Mort a Patrie,* who had been employees of the company owning the surrounding vineyards. Thus did the struggle for national existence strike every hamlet and gathering place of men throughout France and thus has the sacrifice been everywhere tenderly commemorated.

In Epernay itself the evidences of war-time devastation are everywhere, and no more convincing testimonials to the far-reaching destructiveness of modern war could be found than in this city, which, though it suffered little during the few days of actual occupation by the Germans in 1914, was in great measure wrecked by long-range artillery fire and night bombing throughout the remainder of the war. During the second Battle of the Marne in 1918 it received the greatest amount of damage, though the battle front was at no time nearer to the city than about 10 kilometers and most of the time it was more than 20 kilometers distant. The Church of Notre Dame, the oldest and most important in the city, whose other churches are quite modern, had its interior completely wrecked by bombs which destroyed the roof, though the walls and the tall spire continued to stand. When it shall have been restored it is to be hoped that it will be in such a manner as to make inapplicable the jibe of Victor Hugo, who called it "a hideous building, plastered white," having a heavy appearance, "with triglyphs supporting the architrave;" and added that he thought it must have been built "from the design of M. Porterlet-Galichet, a worthy grocer, whose shop and name are close to the church." Even Hugo, however, conceded that the Notre Dame of Epernay had an exquisite façade and some fine stained glass.

In the residence streets all over the city, such as the Rue de Brugny, the Rue Jean Thevenin and the Rue des

Berceaux, many houses were reduced to rubbish heaps by bombs; and stores, restaurants, and hotels were similarly demolished in the business district on the Rue de Châlons, the Place Hugues-Plomb, the Rue du Commerce, and other streets, for the night raiders peppered this unfortified city in every quarter, mercilessly. But though, for a long time after the armistice, one could go scarcely anywhere in Epernay without having one or more ruins in sight, a place of such industrial activity will doubtless repair its injuries speedily. Farther down the river, in the smaller towns of the wine district extending toward Châtillon-sur-Marne, the case is different and here many years may well elapse before the ravages of war will be effaced.

CHAPTER XVI

IN THE SHADOW OF POPE URBAN II

COMPASSED like an island by the billowing seas of vineyards that cover the hillsides of the Marne's left bank 5 or 6 kilometers below Epernay, it is a surprise as well as a delight to come upon the exquisite Château of Boursault, unharmed by the fighting. High up on the hills stands this almost regal palace of the Duchesse d'Uzes, in the midst of a park of fairy-like beauty, the airy towers, serried windows, and white walls mirrored in the blue bosom of a small lake whose sculptured stone basin frames it as the setting of a goldsmith frames a rare turquoise. Although a modern structure, Boursault is built according to the best traditions of the Renaissance and with its lovely lines and its almost unbelievably beautiful surroundings, it is perhaps the most charming château which looks down upon the Marne in all its course. Seen either close at hand, with the background of the verdant valley behind it, or from the opposite hills at Châtillon, it is so chaste, so ethereal, so like a vision materialized out of the mists of morning or the shadows of evening, that the beholder half expects, like the Knight of Triermain, to have

The towers and bastions, dimly seen,
And Gothic battlements between

dissolve into thin air and

The rocks their shapeless form regain.

From Boursault one may look across the Marne and there see, couched among the vines on the towering slopes, the little vineyard village of Damery; a spot which holds a romantic interest as the birthplace of the beautiful and

talented actress of the early eighteenth century, Adrienne Lecouvreur. In this simple, secluded Marne-side country played as a child the woman who freed modern drama from much of its antique pedantry by giving to dialogue its true accents of eloquence and passion, and who endowed with pulsing life the heroines created by her great contemporaries, Racine, Corneille, and Voltaire. Molded of a surpassing beauty and with a mind of rare power, yet swayed by the strong emotions of womanhood, this daughter of the Champagne Hills lived in her own person a drama more moving than any in which she acted, and derived from her relations with Voltaire and, more than all, with the brilliant and honored soldier, Prince Maurice of Saxony, the victor of Fontenoy, a fame transcending that which she owed to her artistic triumphs. Dead in her fortieth year, probably from the effects of poison administered by a rival, her checkered life and tragic death furnished to Scribe, more than a hundred years later, material for a powerful play, and here is one of the names which seems destined longest to survive among those of the children of the Marne.

A seemingly limitless panorama of this well-cultivated region is visible from the top of the great hill of Châtillon, a veritable promontory jutting into the river valley, so conspicuously rearing upon its crest a gigantic statue of Pope Urban II that the mighty figure dominates the country for miles around and remains for a long time within view of the trains which, far below in the valley, speed to and fro between Paris and the Rhine. Standing at the foot of the statue, erected in 1887, of the virile churchman who was the organizer, in 1095, of the First Crusade and the most illustrious son of the illustrious feudal house of Châtillon, the spectator sees, far to his left up the valley, the smiling vil-

lages of Boursault, Villesaint, Montvoisin, and Oeuilly, tangled among the vineyards and reflected in the bright waters of the Marne. The white wonder of Boursault Château glimmers in its park; Epernay itself is invisible only because a rounded hill thrusts out between, though the great forests of the plateau above it roll away in dark green masses to the southern horizon. Nearer at hand, cutting its way deeply down through the hills from the north, lies the vale of the Belval, with Montigny, Villers, Binson-Orquigny, and Reuil nestled along the banks of the tiny stream, while south from Châtillon the little Flagot pursues a sylvan pathway from the Forest of Enghuien and the sisterhood of lakes that send it forth, and enters the Marne hard by Port-a-Binson and Mareuil-le-Port. These busy shipping points on the canalized river, through which pass quantities of lumber from the forests of the region, present in the distance a pleasing scene of activity with the barges moving slowly through the water or lying at the quays receiving their cargoes. Westward the broadening valley, equally entrancing with its green fields, its woodland masses, and its red-roofed villages, unrolls itself past Dormans until the observer may even see in the blue distance the spires of Passy and Reuilly, at the head of the great bend of Jaulgonne.

At the very foot of Châtillon Hill lie the remains of what was, a few years ago, the beautiful Priory of Binson, once an important monastic establishment of the White Fathers of Africa and then, more lately, an orphanage. Its ranges of ancient, low stone buildings, particularly the former House of the Fathers, with its ogival porch in cloistral form and its Roman tower surmounted by a slender spire, all set at the foot of the vine-clad hills, has been said "to complete the marvel of a vast picture of a grace very capti-

vating, very French." But that marvel is now no more. In the battle days of May, June, and July, 1918, the Germans of von Boehn's army assailed and the French of Berthelot's army defended, in desperate combats, the storied precincts of the Priory of Binson. In the struggle the weathered walls, the graceful cloisters, the heaven-pointing spire of the House of the Fathers, rattled down beneath the shells into heaps of ghastly ruin.

But Binson did not suffer alone. In their *Friedensturm,* or "Peace Battle," beginning on July 15, the Germans on the west of Reims directed their greatest effort to making progress up the Marne toward Epernay for the purpose of carrying the Mountain of Reims, capturing Reims itself, and then conquering the valley of the Marne as far as Châlons. Their greatest progress, registered between July 15 and 18, before the Allied counter-attacks fell like an avalanche upon their rear, was made along the Marne from the vicinity of Châtillon to a point just beyond Villesaint, so that Pope Urban's statue looks down upon the line of the enemy's deepest penetration and nearly all the villages within view of its elevated site experienced the bitter fighting of the second Battle of the Marne. At Mareuil-le-Port, where the Thirty-third Regiment of Colonial Infantry covered itself with glory by stopping the rush of the enemy on July 15; at Oeuilly and Reuil and Venteuil and up the valley of the Belval, the French, aided by two Italian divisions, fought grimly and successfully to hold the foe back from the Mountain of Reims and Epernay.

Châtillon itself, on its mighty hill, escaped nothing save total destruction. In 1919, the traveler, mounting the steep, stony road from the valley to this eyrie of the uplands, found himself moving through streets defined by the skeletons of

houses and lined with rows of building stones and other débris of battle picked up by soldiers to clear the passage-ways of the streets. Of the ancient parish church, which preserved columns constructed in the tenth century, but a few pieces of tottering wall remained; gaping shell holes in the hotel were patched with tar paper, and the curious old market with its short, massive stone columns and high hip roof was reduced to the stumps of a few columns. Strangely enough, the huge statue of Pope Urban II, standing, with right arm majestically extended above the Marne, on the hill crest just behind the village, was unscathed, as was the single fragment of towering, ivy-draped wall hard by it which is the only remaining relic of the Château of Châtillon. This vast building was razed by the German soldiery of the Emperor Charles V in the sixteenth century, and its masses of building stone afterward furnished much of the material from which the houses of the village were built.

From Châtillon onward for 30 kilometers, along the sweeping bends which in the Brie district succeed the short windings characteristic of the upper course of the Marne, the river flows through the region of fierce fighting of the second Battle of the Marne. It is the land wherein the battle river of France, like a lovely naiad roused to fury in defense of her woods and hills, in very truth caused the invaders to stumble and fall, ready prey to the strong arms of the Allied hosts which guarded her. Before following the river through that region wherein the tapestries of the vineyards gradually give place to the more luxuriant loveliness of cherry orchards cascading down the hillsides, it will be worth while to gain a grasp of the main features of the great battle in which Americans, for the first time on European soil participated in large numbers, and in which they

French fishermen fish—and never catch anything!

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Châtillon-sur-Marne

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remolded, as it were, the immortal river into a silver thread uniting forever with the bonds of mutual sacrifice the sympathies of the two republics.

The second Battle of the Marne, considered in its broadest aspect, lasted for more than two months and divided itself into four phases. The first of these phases was the initial break-through of the German armies on the Chemin des Dames front from Berry-au-Bac, on the Aisne, to Leuilly, on the Ailette, on May 27, 1918, and their subsequent advance to the Marne, terminating about June 2. The second was the period of semistabilization, marked still by much active fighting, which lasted until July 15; a period of about six weeks. The third phase was that of the last great German offensive, extending from the western edge of the Argonne Forest to Château-Thierry, and continuing from July 15 to 18, and the fourth phase was that of the Allied counter-attack which definitely changed the tide of the war and which was driven forward, at the beginning, from the Aisne near Fontenoy to Château-Thierry, being later extended to the vicinity of Reims. In this counter-attack, begun on July 18, the enemy was ejected from the Marne salient, which had been entirely flattened out by August 4, when the Allied front reached the Vesle River from Soissons to Reims and the line again came temporarily to a standstill.

The original intention of the Germans in attacking on the Chemin des Dames seems merely to have been to force a wedge down to the eastern side of Compiègne and its great forest, which were already closely threatened by them on the north from the positions which they had taken in their March offensive toward Amiens. Thus they aimed to create a salient from which the Allies could be pinched out and driven southwest directly toward Paris. For the purpose of making this

attack, General von Boehn's Seventh Army, of the army group of the German Crown Prince, was increased from a holding strength of 15 divisions to a strength of 42 divisions, of which 28 divisions were picked storm troops. It is estimated that 1,450 batteries — nearly 6,000 guns — were concentrated to support the attack, while the infantry was provided with enormous numbers of heavy and light machine guns and mine throwers.

Having prepared the attack with the utmost secrecy, von Boehn was able to take his opponents entirely by surprise. This portion of the front was regarded as a "quiet sector" and the Sixth French Army under General Duchesne, on which the brunt of the attack fell, was holding from Pontoise to Craonnelle, a distance of 35 kilometers, with only 4 divisions, while from Craonnelle to Reims, General Micheler's Fifth Army had 6 divisions in line, including 2 British divisions which were resting from their hard fighting of March in the Somme Valley. The German advance on the morning of May 27 completely overwhelmed the feeble resistance which these 10 divisions could offer on so extended a front, and by nightfall of the first day the enemy had swept clean the powerful defenses of the Chemin des Dames and reached the watershed between the Aisne and the Vesle. Three days later, in spite of the most strenuous efforts of General Foch and General Pétain to rush in enough reinforcements to stop the drive, the enemy's foremost divisions had reached the Marne from Brasles to Jaulgonne, in the center, while on his right he had taken Soissons and was approaching the Forest of Villers-Cotterets and on his left was closely pressing the defenses of Reims, struggling for a foothold on the skirts of the Mountain of Reims, and pushing down the valley of the Ardre between that important eminence and the Marne.

Carried away by their amazing success, the Germans had by this time apparently determined to consecrate all of their available forces to the exploitation of the new salient, with the object of forcing their way across the Marne and spreading southward toward Montmirail and southwestward toward Paris. But the concentration of Allied reserves was by now sufficiently heavy to contain the attack. Between May 31 and June 5 the troops defending the front between the Marne and Reims succeeded in slowing up and halting the enemy on a line between the latter city and Châtillon-sur-Marne. From Châtillon to Château-Thierry he was held to the north bank of the river, General Marchand's Tenth Colonial Division, to which was attached the Seventh Machine-Gun Battalion of the Third American Division, strangling his violent efforts to cross at Château-Thierry. From this city to the Aisne the Germans struggled with the utmost determination to advance, and they gained a little more ground but were stopped in the center just outside the Forest of Villers-Cotterets.

Now came into being along the front of the new salient, as elsewhere, the condition of almost stationary warfare which had generally characterized the Western Front throughout the war. On both sides, all divisions excepting those needed for holding the line or for local operations were withdrawn for rest, training, or employment elsewhere, while artillery duels, raids, or attacks with limited objectives became the order of the day. During this period, on the line of the Marne itself the Third American Division took over a front of nearly 10 kilometers, extending from the vicinity of Château-Thierry eastward to the Jaulgonne bend. On each of its flanks were French troops and it had in support the Twenty-eighth American Division.

By local operations during the month of June the Germans made two attempts to enlarge the Marne salient by driving forward its flanks at Reims and north of the Villers-Cotterets Forest, but both attempts were broken up. Finally, on July 15, following preparations more formidable than they had made for any of their previous attacks, they launched between the Argonne and Château-Thierry on a front of nearly 110 kilometers, the tremendous offensive advertised to their own troops as the *Friedensturm,* or "Peace Battle," which was designed, like von Hausen's and the Duke of Würtemberg's attack on Foch and Langle de Cary in the first Battle of the Marne, to smash through the Allied center, separate Paris from Verdun and pour the Teutonic hordes across the Marne into the heart of France.

In undertaking this gigantic project, Ludendorff and Hindenberg put to the hazard virtually all of their reserve strength in the desperate hope of gaining a decision before the coming hosts of America should give to the Allies a preponderance of numbers too great to be overcome. But in doing so they underestimated both the resisting power of their opponents and the margin of reserve strength which the latter already possessed, thereby compassing their own undoing. Fully advised by a service of information which was now unexcelled, of the time, the place, and the strength of the impending blow, General Foch and General Pétain met it at all points with forces just sufficient to smother it, holding in hand in the meantime for a counter-blow when the proper moment should arrive, the accumulation of reserves which was now available, thanks largely to the steady inflow of American troops.

By July 18, the Germans, in their desperate efforts to win through on the Champagne-Marne front, had so com-

pletely involved the bulk of their forces in the struggle that General Foch, with the intuition given only to the greatest commanders, judged that the moment for the counter-attack had arrived. It was launched on the early morning of the eighteenth on the western face of the Marne salient, which was now virtually the enemy's rear as related to his forces attacking between the Marne and Reims, and which was held by relatively feeble numbers. The Allied effort was instantly, dazzlingly successful. Driving in with the force of 21 divisions, of which the First, Second, Fourth, and Twenty-sixth American Divisions formed an important part, supported by large numbers of tanks, General Degoutte's and General Mangin's troops hurled themselves upon the 12 divisions of von Boehn's army and penetrated to an average depth of 4 miles on the first day, capturing 17,000 prisoners and 250 guns. By the evening of July 19 the assailants were nearly up to the Soissons-Château-Thierry highway and so closely threatening the railroad from Soissons and Bazoches to Château-Thierry, the enemy's only rail communication into the salient, that he became seriously alarmed for the safety of his forces on the Marne-Reims front. In consequence of the situation, he suspended his attacks on that front and attempted to break off the action and withdraw from the small bridgehead which he had succeeded in establishing south of the Marne, between Villesaint and the Jaulgonne bend.

But General Berthelot's army and the newly formed Ninth Army of General De Mitry, taking up the offensive and extending it northeastward from Château-Thierry, pressed the Germans so hard that the latter succeeded only with the greatest difficulty in escaping across the river, from the twentieth to the twenty-second of July, in the vicinity

of Binson, and Dormans; Passy, Marcilly, and Jaulgonne, on pontoons and foot bridges which were being torn to pieces as they passed by the raining shells of the Allied artillery and the bombs of the zealous French and American aviators. Relentlessly pursued, the Germans fell back on the line of the Ourcq, where they came to a stand on July 27 and succeeded in holding until August 2, permitting the greater part of their material and trains to be withdrawn from the salient. Then in severe fighting the Allied forces, including the Twenty-eighth, Thirty-second, and Forty-second American Divisions, finally broke through and followed the enemy across the uplands to the Vesle, behind which, on the formidable hills north of the river, the Germans came to another stand for a few weeks. On this line, about August 6, the second Battle of the Marne may be said to have terminated.

At about the time that the battle ended, Marshal von Hindenberg, in a *communiqué* to the German people, attempted to explain and justify the "strategical retreat," declaring that "the decisive victory" of German arms had merely been temporarily postponed. It is doubtful, however, if even his own countrymen were deceived. All the world could see that the scales had begun to weigh in favor of the Allies and that, however long it might take to bring about the final decision, the second Battle of the Marne was the beginning of the end of the World War, as truly as the Battle of Gettysburg had been the beginning of the end of the American War of the Rebellion. For the third time in its history, the Marne had proved the inexpugnable bulwark of the free nations of the world.

CHAPTER XVII

THE REACH OF DORMANS

THERE is a pleasant expanse of valley land stretching beneath the shouldering Marne Hills from the escarpment of the Châtillon eminence toward Dormans. Above it the vineyards sweep up to the sky line, the vine poles in summer standing in rigid forests along the slopes, and in winter lying piled in neat, conical heaps, so regularly spaced that at a distance they resemble the tents of an army. The deep-furrowed valley of the Semoignes River comes down from the highlands of the Tardenois and terminates in the Marne above Dormans, and formerly from among the vineyards of its hillsides there looked down upon the broad bottom lands the smiling villages of Vandieres-sous-Châtillon and Verneuil and Vincelles, the hamlet first named lying cupped in an amphitheater of hills, watched over by a white and demure old château drowsing among the great trees of its park a few hundred feet up the slopes. Below Verneuil a now demolished bridge carried across the Marne from Dormans the narrow-gauge railway which winds, with many a turning, up the valley of the Semoignes to Ville-en-Tardenois and thence to Fismes, on the Vesle.

But the smile was stricken from these little clusters of human habitations during the ghastly midsummer days of 1918, and the receding tide of battle left them mere heaps of tumbled masonry and shattered fragments of walls. The solidly built church of Verneuil, with its square tower surmounting the transept, became a ruin, gaping with shell holes; the spire of Vincelles, framed in wood, was stripped and stricken sidewise, like a curiously distorted skeleton, its in-

terior piled with broken stone and headless and mutilated statues. It was along this part of the front that von Boehn's troops forced their way across the river in greatest numbers on July 15 and it was to this segment that they clung most tenaciously a week later, when, reeling backward at all other points, they maintained their hold upon some seven miles of the river bank between Reuil and Dormans, in order, apparently, to keep the Paris-Châlons Railroad, along the south bank, under fire. The Dormans quadrilateral of the French battle maps, revised to July 17 for the counter-offensive, showed, besides numerous enemy trenches, battery positions and trails for the use of troops leading down to the shores of the river, all of which had been accurately located by Allied aëroplane observers, a foot bridge just above Port-a-Binson, a foot bridge and a wagon bridge not far below Vandieres, a wagon bridge south of Verneuil, two foot bridges and three wagon bridges at Vincelles, a foot bridge and two wagon bridges just below Dormans, and a foot bridge below Treloup. All of these bridges had been laid by the Germans and used by them in crossing to the south bank and many of them were later destroyed by the French artillery and bombers. Nevertheless, on such of them as remained, the bulk of the enemy succeeded eventually in escaping to the north and when the troops of De Mitry's army crossed, in turn and on July 22 established a bridge head in the bend between Dormans and Barzy, they experienced desperate fighting in gaining the wooded heights of the Forest of Riz, and lost and regained Vincelles village several times before finally taking it permanently.

Over all this land, as far up stream as Reuil-sur-Marne and down river to the bends below Château-Thierry, the débris of military occupation was thickly scattered, especially

ammunition. In the summer of 1919, parties of French engineers and German prisoners of war were still busy on all parts of the battlefields, gathering into heaps for salvage hundreds of thousands of empty shell cases and into other heaps untold quantities of "duds" and unexploded German shells from their abandoned dumps and battery positions. The German ammunition was assembled in spots remote from buildings and in the center of each heap was placed a detonator, which was then fired electrically from a distance. Nothing was more common on the still, bright summer days of the once-more peaceful countryside than to hear the deep boom of an explosion and to see arise above the treetops beyond some distant, bare hillside, a billowing cloud of smoke, betokening the destruction of one more collection of the projectiles whose deadly power has made of modern war a hell on earth even more hideous than it has been from time immemorial.

But at Dormans itself, formerly a place of 2,500 people, closely hugging the south shore of the river which here runs straight and smooth, the destruction is still more impressive because more extensive. This ancient town before the war derived its chief commercial importance from the shipping of cherries produced in the orchard district roundabout and from the conversion of large quantities of the fruit into preserves at several local plants. It was also a port of some significance for the shipment, by rail and canal, of the grapes of the neighborhood to Epernay or Reims. But Dormans was grievously damaged in the fighting and its one long, wide street, separated from the river by the main line and the yards of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est, was left lined by crumbling ruins. A spacious and venerable château with a huge, medieval tower at one corner, which occupies a niche in the hill-

side overlooking the town, was not badly wrecked. But the fine old church, containing an ogival choir, a Romanesque window, and rows of columns and capitals of the same order, was much disfigured by the German artillery fire from north of the river, though the greater part of its walls remained standing. This was fortunately true, also, of the tall and graceful bell tower, with its long, narrow arched windows on each face through whose airy lattices the bells, hanging like great flowers from the slender beams, may be distinctly seen, swung high above the clustered roofs of the town.

It was neither in 1914 nor in 1918 that the church of Dormans first looked down upon German invaders. At this place on October 10, 1575, the Army of the Catholic League, under the impetuous Duke Henry of Guise, came up with the German adherents of the Prince of Condé and defeated them sharply, "the hunt," so it was said, lasting all that day and throughout the following night. Guise himself, participating hotly in the pursuit, followed one mounted antagonist, whom he had twice touched with his sword, until the other shot him twice with a pistol, one bullet taking effect in his leg and one carrying away his left ear and part of the cheek, thus earning for him the nickname by which he is known in history, Henry the Scarred (Le Balafré).

In the summer of 1919 the writer, coming into Dormans about noon of a sunny day, drew up before a small hostelry, the Hôtel Demoncy, whose outer walls and inner ceilings were pocked with shell splinters while the back yard was a litter of débris from the outbuildings in rear which had been knocked down in the bombardments. The good lady of the house, nevertheless, was able to smile hospitably and to set out a savory luncheon on the table in the small dining-room, upon whose cracked wall hung a bright lithograph of a vil-

lage, in whose church tower a tiny clock, keeping correct time, still ticked busily, as it probably had done while the shells were falling around. Outside in the street passed a long column of German prisoners of war, guarded by leisurely poilus, going to their barracks from a morning's work among the ruins, and the sight of them thus engaged in the work of restoration, as well as the cordial *bon jours* of their guards to the American visitors, added a zest to the noonday repast.

Not in Dormans alone but everywhere in the battle zones of the Marne, a particularly warm cordiality toward Americans was evident on the part of the French people. Soldiers, business men, laborers, women, and children, all alike, broke into smiles and gestures of greeting at sight of an American car and American uniforms, once so common in these regions but later grown so rare. On every hand the soldier from overseas was made to feel the warmth of the regard in which he and his country are held by "the common people" who are the body and blood of France.

Out of Dormans the Marne follows a long southwestward stretch between the orcharded hillsides, past Courthiezy on the left shore and Tréloup and Courcelles on the right, until it sweeps around northward into the head of the Jaulgonne bend; the longest bend which we have yet encountered, though much longer ones become characteristic of the river below Château-Thierry. The broad, macadamized National Route 3, following the left side of the bend through Reuilly, rambling Sauvigny, and then Courtemont, with the forest masses of the Bois de Condé clothing the long peninsula of heights between the Marne and the Surmelin, on the left, looks down long slopes of billowing cherry branches to the sparkling tide of the river and, beyond that, up over other reaches of similar foliage, which in springtime are seas of

snowy bloom, to the high, dark spurs of the Forest of Ris, outlined against the eastern sky.

From Courtemont the view is one of rare beauty, for beyond the Marne, submerged to their eaves amid the orchards and wholly overshadowed by the forest walls beyond, the hamlets of Passy, Rozay, Marcilly, and Barzy, lie, like a loosely strung necklace of coral beads, beyond the ribbon of the river. Through scores of quiet, uneventful years these villages had drowsed among their fruit trees, to find themselves at last rent asunder in a brief but horrible nightmare of battle that day when the Thirty-sixth German Division poured down the slopes and, crossing the river between Courtemont and Sauvigny, pressed the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Division over the heights and down into the valley of the Surmelin at St. Agnan and Sacconey and Dannejeu Farm, where they came in contact with the unyielding opposition of the One Hundred and Ninth Infantry of the American Twenty-eighth Division. It was at the demolished wagon bridge across the Marne between Passy and Sauvigny that there began the action of American troops which the present author described as follows in the *Stars and Stripes,* the official newspaper of the American Expeditionary Forces, in the issue of January 31, 1919:

> On the right, the One Hundred and Ninth Infantry and the One Hundred and Eighth Machine-Gun Battalion had a rough-and-tumble experience among the woods and hills quite as exciting as could ever have happened to the ancestors of any of their Pennsylvanians in the old days when the Indians haunted the forests of the Keystone State. The German advance got across the river at Reuilly and east of there and the front line of the One Hundred and Thirteenth French Infantry Regiment was compelled to retire, leaving isolated Company M, One Hundred and Ninth Infantry, which was guarding the bridge across the Marne south of Passy.

Nothing was heard of this company for so long that divisional headquarters feared it had been annihilated. But, on the contrary, it was doing yeoman service by furnishing for some time the only solid resistance on this part of the line and delaying the German rush by standing on its original position until flanked on both sides, then falling back fighting to another position in the Bois de Condé and finally to a third, 500 meters south of the isolated woodland farm, La Grange aux Bois, whence, at about noon, it succeeded in getting word of its continued existence back to headquarters.

In the meantime, Colonel Brown, with the greater part of the regiment and some French detachments, established a line of resistance which at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon lay approximately along the original second position from the northern edge of the Bois de Rougis to Condé-en-Brie, with the First Battalion on the right and the Second Battalion on the left and the valley containing the village of St. Agnan in front. Here the enemy was virtually stopped in the edges of the Bois de Condé, to the north.

Left of the One Hundred and Ninth, the French had established a line extending from Dannejeu Farm down the Surmelin through Connigis, north of which village it had liaison with the Thirty-eighth United States Infantry of the Third Division. The front of a good part of these positions, both American and French, was protected by the fire of the One Hundred and Eighth Machine-Gun Battalion, near Dannejeu Farm, and of the One Hundred and Ninth Machine-Gun Battalion, near St. Agnan — an assistance of the most vital importance in the temporary absence of artillery support.

On the morning of the sixteenth, at 10:00 o'clock, the Twentieth French Infantry Division having come into the sector to counter-attack, the First Battalion of the One Hundred and Ninth Infantry under Major Gregory, went forward with it. But the whole attack was repulsed in spite of the fearless leadership of men like Second Lieutenant H. Q. Griffin, who was killed in front of a German machine-gun emplacement after he had led his platoon to the most advanced point reached by any detachment, and the work of such enlisted men as Corporal J. J. Lott, Company C, who twice went ahead of his platoon, cut the enemy wire and then returned and guided the troops through the gaps he had made.

Another assault delivered at 6:30 P. M. was likewise repulsed, while St. Agnan, after having once been retaken by the French, was lost again before night. After this, however, the situation began steadily to improve, and on the seventeenth, the Twenty-

eighth Division began moving out of the sector preparatory to taking its place in the counter-offensive, the One Hundred and Ninth Infantry having lost about 780 officers and men during its confused fighting, and the One Hundred and Eighth Machine-Gun Battalion more than 40.

But although the incident just described was gallant in the extreme and worthy of the best traditions of our army, it is on turning the bend of the road beyond Courtemont, going on a few hundred yards to the ruins of Varennes, and then climbing the open slopes of the hillside above the latter, that one sees spread before him the vast panorama, extending for full 15 kilometers down the Marne and framed by majestic billows of hills on either hand, which was the stage whereon America's warrior sons enacted the mighty drama that placed the Marne forever in our history, and America forever in the most stirring traditions of the Marne.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ROCK OF THE MARNE

FROM the commanding eminence above Varennes, mentioned in the last chapter, the visitor to the fields of conflict of the Third United States Division may scrutinize as upon a map nearly every point at which the men of that sturdy organization, which now proudly styles itself "The Rock of the Marne," hurled back from the shore of the river committed to their keeping, the repeated assaults of courageous and desperate foes; kept closed the road to Montmirail and thence to Paris, and finally pursued their beaten and discomfited foes northward across the forested hills in the first stage of the steady advance which, for the Third Division, was to end only when its flag should float majestically from the walls of the Fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, above the German Rhine.

From the heights of Varennes, one looks down the long slopes of grain and grass land to the roofless walls of the hamlet among whose scattered cottages on the morning of July 15, 1918, as the waves of the German infantry came up through the valley mists, the left flank of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth French Division was in liaison with the right of the Thirty-eighth Infantry, of the Third American Division. Thence the eye crosses the level bottom land, intersected by the embankment of the railroad, to the splintered southern abutment of the suspension bridge at Jaulgonne, its fallen cables dangling in the water. Close beside it is the place where the Twenty-eighth American Division laid the pontoon bridge on which it crossed in pursuit of the enemy. Beyond the river, one looks over the dwellings of Jaulgonne

and up the hill slopes beyond toward Le Charmel, whence the German Fifth Grenadier Regiment descended to the attack.

Turning westward, one sees at the foot of the slope on which he stands, the quiet waters of the Surmelin joining themselves to those of the Marne, and, a kilometer beyond, in the midst of the wide bottom which is a patchwork of open fields save for rows of orchard trees or high-trimmed poplars marking the roads, the square church tower of Mézy. With its cottages about it the church of Mézy lies huddled between the railroad and the naked river bank, just as it lay on the morning of July 15 when a platoon of the Thirtieth United States Infantry fought to virtual extinction in the village streets and behind the railroad grade against the Sixth Grenadiers, who had forced a pontoon bridge over the river between Mézy and Chartèves.

South of Mézy and 2 kilometers distant from it up gently rolling slopes of grain fields, stretches the white filament of the Paris-Metz road, embroidered with tapering poplars. Behind it, where it climbs up from the Surmelin and then drops again down the slope on the other side into Fossoy, hidden in patches of woodland above the Marne, stood the battle line of the Seventh and Thirtieth Infantry Regiments, thin, but not to be shaken; a line of young soldiers, fighting their first great battle like heroes.

Northward across the Marne, at the foot of the steep, orcharded hills running back to the Forest of Fére, rises Chartèves, white-walled beneath its riven church tower and beyond it, across the ravine of the Mont l'Evêque rivulet, Mont St. Père, clinging to the rugged slopes which even the blasts of war have not deprived of all their wealth of bending fruit trees and trellised vines. Farther still to the west,

Chartèves, white-walled beneath its riven church tower

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Chartèves. Two-man rifle pit in foreground

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holding the swinging bend of the Marne in an amphitheater of heights, the hills of the right shore sweep around, revealing the clustered houses of Gland at the base of the promontory where the river turns again, but concealing Brasles among its wheat fields and the more distant mass of Château-Thierry. Far beyond the latter, however, on another long river bend, Essomes and Aulnois and Rouvroy paint mere flecks of color against the hill of the Bois des Loup, blue and shimmering in the distance.

If one withdraw his glance once more to the vale of the Surmelin he sees, almost at his feet, the considerable town of Crézancy outspread upon the farther side of the small valley and beyond it the dark green spurs of the Bois d'Aigremont thrusting down the long slopes between that place and Fossoy, beyond which the roofs of Blesmes and Chierry lend varied color to the verdure of the Marne lowlands. Smiling beneath the sunshine of summer and dappled by the shadows of the passing clouds, the whole far-reaching picture, blent of the elements of bounteous nature and the toil of human hands, is as fair a one as the Marne may show between Sabinus' cave and the walls of Paris. Yet the sequestered villages of this little Arcady were riddled by the tempest of war, its flower-starred fields plowed with shells and its orchards and vineyards lopped of their verdure, while, in the very first weeks of the conflict, its gentle and industrious people suffered outrages too horrible for words to describe. It will suffice to quote a bald statement concerning a few of them from a volume called *The German Terror in France,* by Arnold J. Toynbee, in which every incident related was amply authenticated by the reports of the French Government Commission appointed to investigate alleged violations by the Germans of the usages of civilized warfare.

At Charmel, the Germans, arriving on September 3, pillaged the houses and cellars and burned a château. A woman was violated by a soldier. "He stretched me on a table," she states, "and gripped me by the throat." At Jaulgonne on the same date, the Prussian Guard pillaged property worth about 250,000 francs and killed two civilians — one 87 and the other 61 years old. The former was found lying shot in a field; the second was seen by the Germans talking to a French soldier (who escaped), and was seized as a hostage — he was killed next morning. "One of the Germans," states a witness, "gave him a bayonet stroke in the side. There was a dreadful rattling in his throat and they finished him off with a revolver-shot in the forehead." . . . . On September 3, the Germans also entered Varennes. "We were received with a heavy fire," states one of the diarists quoted above, who had marched thither from Noyon. "It has cost the battalion four dead and several wounded. Corpses are lying about everywhere in the street. . . . . September 6, the village is set on fire, because civilians have joined in the shooting."

Crossing the Marne, von Bülow's troops murdered, at Mézy-Moulins, an old man of 72. At Crézancy they pillaged a château — the damage was estimated by an expert at 123,844 francs. The owner was not present — fortunately for himself, for a shopkeeper at Crézancy, who protested against the looting of his shop, was driven off, blindfolded and stumbling, but urged on by blows and bayonet thrusts, to Charly, where he was shot. Another inhabitant of Crézancy was also taken to Charly and killed. "He had a lance-thrust or bayonet-thrust near the heart." Another, a young man of 18, was dragged out of a house and shot on September 3, the day the Germans arrived. After the murder, the German officer inquired whether the victim was a soldier and remarked, on learning that he was not: "Well, he might have become one, anyway." At Connigis (the town on the Surmelin above Crézancy), the Germans murdered a man and violated a girl in the presence of her mother-in-law, taking it in turns to keep her father-in-law at a distance — her husband was with the colors.

Warned by such a hideous lesson of what they had to expect from the Germans, when the hordes of the kaiser again poured southward in May, 1918, the inhabitants of the valley nearly all fled, leaving the country deserted. From

Jaulgonne to Château-Thierry the enemy early occupied the northern bank of the Marne; the southern shore remained in the hands of the hardy doughboys of the Third Division. On July 15 came the German *Friedensturm.* Of the ensuing struggle the writer said in the *Independent* (May 29, 1920):

General Dickman's Third Division, because it alone was occupying the front line of its sector, east of Château-Thierry, bore a conspicuous part in the repulse of the great German offensive. At dawn on July 15, the masses of German infantry came pouring down from the lofty hills which from the north dominate the lowlands within the bend of the Marne west of the river Surmelin. Owing to the great breadth of the sector, over ten kilometers, the four regiments of the Third Division were all in line, the Fourth Infantry on the left, then in order, the Seventh, the Thirtieth and the Thirty-eighth. The attack fell entirely on the last three regiments. Vigorously supported by the fire of the American and French artillery stationed farther back, even the outpost detachments of the Seventh, Thirtieth and Thirty-eighth Regiments, commanded respectively by Colonels T. M. Anderson, E. L. Butts, and U. S. McAlexander, refused to retire from the river bank and with their rifles and machine-guns drove back the boats and pontoons in which the Germans sought to cross.

At only two points on the left and center did the enemy succeed in getting over. The small detachment which crossed near Fossoy was destroyed by soldiers of the right of the Seventh Infantry and the left of the Thirtieth Infantry. A larger body, amounting altogether to more than a regiment, which came over from Chartèves, was met at Mézy and along the grade of the Metz-Paris Railroad by an advanced platoon of the Thirtieth Infantry, which, scorning to surrender or even to give ground, fought until it was practically exterminated, after having inflicted far greater losses upon its assailants. The Germans who passed Mézy and pushed on south toward the highway between Château-Thierry and Crézancy, on the Surmelin, were met and repulsed north of the road by detachments of the Seventh and Thirtieth Infantry under Major Ditto and Major Paschal. By 8:00 A. M. the fight on the left and center had virtually ended in our victory.

On the right, however, the Thirty-eighth Infantry had a longer, if not a harder, struggle. In the hilly, wooded country east of

the Surmelin the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth French Division fell back when the Germans crossed the river. This exposed the right flank of Colonel McAlexander's regiment, but instead of retiring from the Marne the flank was merely swung around facing east and extended down the Surmelin by reserve companies so as to stop the attack in that direction. Along the Marne at the foot of the Jaulgonne Bend, Major Rowe's battalion broke the attempts of the Germans to cross and, though surrounded on three sides, Major Rowe cheerfully sent back word to headquarters that his men were holding the line and could do so indefinitely. They did hold it for five days, until the enemy retired from the hills east of them.

A few words from a graphic account of his experiences in the battle by First Lieutenant Kurt Hesse, of the Fifth Regiment of German Grenadiers, translated by Major General Dickman, indicates more convincingly than any comments from our own side the terrible effectiveness of the fire delivered by the Third Artillery Brigade, Third Division, under command of General William M. Cruikshank. Having learned beforehand when the enemy was to begin the battle, the American batteries opened counter-preparation ten minutes before the German preliminary bombardment was to commence. Lieutenant Hesse says:

Is it never going to commence? We were dozing. At last! A fierce artillery fire begins. I looked at my watch. One o'clock in the morning. Had our artillery made a mistake? Firing was not to begin till 1:10 A. M. I jump out of the hole in which I was sitting — and as quickly jumped back. In front and rear I hear the strike of projectiles. The enemy had commenced! Ten minutes later our artillery fire began, not simultaneously as ordered, but here and there, and rose for ten minutes to powerful strength, so that we had the hope that now all would be well. Then it grew weaker and weaker, and often the enemy's artillery fire was more powerful than our own. In a short time all telephone connections forward and to the rear were destroyed. . . . .

. . . . After hours of waiting we received a more detailed report as follows: "The First Battalion, which was to attack on the

right, was caught by a fearful artillery fire in the narrow lane leading down to the river. Only parts of the battalion reached the river. The pioneers failed. The pontoons remained on the ground, several hundred yards from the Marne; crossing at this point is impossible, because strong enemy infantry forces with numerous machine-guns are making a stubborn defense of the opposite bank.". . . .

The infantry lying without cover in the great Jaulgonne Forest, where the brush is so thick that it is impossible to get through, and where, on the other hand, there is scarcely a tree thick enough to afford protection against a rifle bullet. There the projectiles of the enemy's massed artillery are falling. Not a spot is spared. The place is under the continued fire of a heavy battery. The explosions in the forest are frightful, nerve-wracking. The clearing near by comes under the fire of a light battery every five minutes, and in a little while is black with corpses. And the narrow lane to the right is swept by shrapnels pursuing their fiery course like comets. The men run about madly, looking for cover. And again there are rushing sounds with dull reports: "Gas shells! Put on your masks!" We already could not see anything — now surely not. Gloomy despair overpowers many. They feel helpless, praying for daylight. The wounded cry out. Finally a hoarse command is uttered by a company commander who even now realizes his duty: "Fall in! Has everybody got a rifle?" Then we advance in the narrow lanes, so terribly stricken, but which are the only ways leading to the river. The pioneers are in position a little distance lower down. Their leader is helpless. He has only a few men left. The infantry itself takes hold to drag the pontoons the remaining 200 meters down to the river. . . . .

Eventually what was left of Lieutenant Hesse's regiment got across the river, only to be forced to withdraw again three days later, sacrificing, as he said, "the last of the old fellows of 1914" in the retreat. But it was on the north bank of the Marne that they had really been defeated, in the first hours of the attack. He continues:

Never have I seen so many dead men, never such frightful battle scenes. The Americans, lying in a grain field in a semicircle, allowed two companies to approach within thirty to fifty paces and

then shot practically all of them down in heaps. This enemy had nerve; we must give him credit for that; but he also displayed a savage roughness. "The Americans kill everybody!" was the cry of terror of July 15, which for a long time stuck in the bones of our men. In our home country people joked about the deficient instruction of this enemy, about "American bluff," and other things. There is the principal responsibility for the fact that of the troops led into action on July 15, more than 60 per cent were left dead or wounded, lying on the field of battle.

The Battle of the "Marne Division" was one of the finest examples on record of American tenacity in defense and, later, of American initiative in attack. When General Dickman's troops were relieved by the Thirty-second American Division on the night of July 29, they had suffered 5,986 casualties but were already standing on the southern bank of the Ourcq, 10 kilometers north of Chartèves.

Before the war, the little center of this secluded valley was Crézancy, where there existed a factory for the purpose, peculiar considering its location, of manufacturing buttons from the seeds of palm trees, or "vegetable ivory." Besides this industry there were located close to the town in the Surmelin Valley, an agricultural school of repute, and the vine nurseries of the Department of the Marne. The town is served by the railway coming down the Dhuis River and the Surmelin from Montmirail and Condé, which line joins the Paris-Metz trunk line at Mézy, thus rendering the latter a rather important junction in ordinary times.

The church of Mézy, so conspicuous an object on the battle field of the Third Division, was already badly in need of restoration before the war, when it was described as "an exquisite work of the twelfth century with buttresses ornamented with medallions, high ogival windows in the choir and, in the interior, an elegant triforium and columns." Not

less attractive in the distance across the Marne, at the entrance to the ravine of the Ru de Mont-l'Evêque, are the two little centers, Chartèves and Mont St. Père, lifting each a church tower on the flanks of the hills. All the country contrasts with the high plateaus by reason of the freshness of its scenery; the great riverside prairies bordering the Marne, the slopes carpeted with vines and fruit trees and the white villages emerging from the intense verdure.

In the high plateau toward Montmirail, thinly peopled and heavily wooded, wherein the Dhuis and other small rivers have their uncontaminated sources, begins the huge Aqueduct of the Dhuis, which from this virgin country conveys into Paris the greater part of the city's water supply. In its course the aqueduct descends the Surmelin Valley nearly to Crézancy and then makes a sharp bend westward toward Fossoy, passing, for a few hundred feet, beyond the high-road on which the Seventh United States Infantry made its stand on July 15. It is interesting to speculate upon how much suffering and damage far-away Paris might have experienced had the enemy been able to wrest from the hands of the Americans a section of the aqueduct for a long enough period to have enabled him to cut it and thus break the water supply of the metropolis.

The valley between Jaulgonne and Château-Thierry has not, in past times, lacked devotees to celebrate its charms, either in literature or art. At Mont St. Père, poised at the head of its moss-grown steps above the river, lived and worked Lhermitte, the rustic but powerful artist of Champagne, finding inspiration for his brush in the rural scenery on every side. Here, also, La Fontaine, native and, as a young man, resident, of Château-Thierry, found the setting for many of his immortal *Fables,* not least among them the

Fable of the Fox and the Grapes. But it is in Château-Thierry itself, eloquent with traditions of him as well as of others as greatly distinguished, that one comes upon the personal glamour of La Fontaine, eccentric child of the Marne.

CHAPTER XIX

WHERE DWELT THE SLUGGARD KINGS

AT Château-Thierry, which, from Blesmes and Chierry, the traveler comes at by the Paris road passing through the southern suburbs and across two bridges into the main part of the city, the flavor of romance in pre-war days must have been mainly supplied by legends of Jean de la Fontaine and Charles Martel, two widely diverse characters, truly. To these legends, in future generations, will be added another group, those of *les Américains.* The three facts are obvious, immediately one enters the city. At the northern end of the last bridge, facing west along the broad boulevard which borders the right bank of the Marne, stands a statue, by Laitié, of the great fabulist; chipped by German and American machine-gun bullets and with the left leg broken by a shell splinter, but still intact in the main. Set in the pavement almost at La Fontaine's feet is a square stone tablet on which are chiseled the words: "Dedicated to the 3rd Division, U. S. A., Aug. 9, 1919." This tablet, placed on the date mentioned by representatives of the "Marne Division," indicates the first step in the construction of the monumental bridge across the Marne which that division intends eventually to erect as its own memorial in France and, at the same time, as a gift to the city of Château-Thierry to replace the bridge, built in 1768, which was blown up by the Americans on the night of June 1, 1918, to prevent the Germans from crossing the river. Finally, if one stand beside the tablet and look up the street formerly called the Rue de Pont but now the Rue du Maréschal Pétain, which, narrow and walled by high buildings, leads northward from

the bridge into the Place du Marché, he sees, towering up beyond the Hôtel de Ville, a steep hill slope crowned by decayed but massive walls. These are the remains of the once mighty Château of the "Sluggard King," Thierry IV of Neustria, built for him in 720 A. D. by his all-powerful Mayor of the Palace, Charles Martel, who saved Europe to Christianity by his defeat of the Saracens at Tours in 732 and who united France and left it to become the greatest nation of earth under the genius of his grandson, Charlemagne.

Thus, standing at one spot in this quaint city whose very center is traversed by the lucid current of the Marne, one may reflect upon a panorama of events covering twelve centuries and profoundly affecting the whole course of civilization; the rise of France to greatness and power, the eminence of its intellectual estate, and its recent salvation from submergence by a spurious *kultur*.

But the physical aspects of the city, with which we are chiefly concerned, are most agreeably revealed from the elevated ramparts of the ancient château, beneath which roll away to west, south, and east the closely built streets and the wide stretches of countryside, rich in associations, whose every vista is enlivened by the ample bends of the Marne. At mid-height of the hillside a road, leading round through a quarter of the city which is very quiet and very medieval in aspect, comes curving presently to the château gateway. Its low, deep arch, pierced between the ponderous octagonal towers of the barbican, gives access to the long, narrow interior court which was formerly occupied by the crowded structures of the citadel, but is now given over to a park whose drives and pathways wind between large, dense trees.

The château was a place of almost impregnable strength before the introduction of artillery, but it was besieged and

Château-Thierry itself, eloquent with traditions

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Hill 204, looking toward Château-Thierry

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A street in Château-Thierry

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captured by the English in 1421 and again in 1544 by the Germans of Charles v. Standing at the southeastern side of its razed and moss-grown battlements one looks across the wheat fields to the white walls of Brasles, nestled at the foot of the towering Bois de Barbillon Hill, and across the Marne by Chierry and Blesmes to the fair downs and woodlands beloved of La Fontaine. One may fancy the writer, as a boy, wandering over the precincts of the deserted château, in his day still covered with a maze of ruined halls and passage-ways, and from the decaying battlements peopling the distant countryside with the odd creatures, half brute and half human, of his awakening imagination.

Walking on to the southern side of the height, at the head of the long flight of steps which ascends from the Place de la Hôtel de Ville, one contemplates a scene which rouses thoughts more stirring than pensive. Far across the Marne, where the hills rise beyond Nesles, there runs between checkerboard fragments of woodland the straight road to Fontenelle and Montmirail. Over that road, in the chill dusk of the evening of February 11, 1814, a watcher on the château would have seen a terrified mass of fugitives, the Russians of Sacken and the Prussians of d'York, encumbered with wagons and artillery, pouring northward from the battlefield of Montmirail toward the bridges of Château-Thierry, pursued and belabored by the exultant cuirassiers of Napoleon. As the darkness deepened, he would have seen the demoralized fugitives, or such of them as had not been slain or captured by the French, spreading through the streets of the unfortunate city and, stung by defeat and the lust for vengeance, giving themselves over to pillage and every species of outrage upon the citizens. Then, as the dawn of the twelfth broke after the fearful night, he would have seen

the 24 squadrons of Prussian horse under General Horn, as yet unscathed in the battle, maneuver into position on the open grounds south of the city for the purpose of stopping the French pursuit; he would have seen the dark columns of Ney's cavalry corps swing into position on the slopes beyond and then, charging in clouds of dust and with thunder of hoofs, under the eye of the emperor himself sweep the hapless foe from their path and gallop on into Château-Thierry, greeted before they could gain its streets by throngs of men and women and children pouring forth to welcome their deliverers. He would have seen these civilians working furiously to repair the Marne bridge for the pursuing French cavalry and also, alas! he would have seen many of them, goaded to frenzy by the horrors of the preceding night, slaying without mercy the scattered wounded and prisoners of the enemy as the latter fled northward into the hills of Orxois.

From the same battlements on September 2, 1914, the observer would have looked down upon other German hosts swarming over the surrounding hills, but now advancing and encircling the town. At about 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon the field-gray uniforms would have been noted filtering into the streets from the west, along the Paris and the Essomes roads, while the French rear guards, firing sullenly, fell back southward. Next day Château-Thierry would again have been disclosed, writhing under the hands of pillagers no less brutal than their ancestors of a century before. Then would have been seen, in the words of the acting mayor as quoted by Mr. Toynbee:

> Château-Thierry completely pillaged. The work was done under the officers' eyes and the loot was carried away in wagons. German prisoners have been found in possession of jewels, stolen here, and articles of clothing, obtained from the plunder of the shops,

have likewise been found among the effects of German doctors who remained behind at Château-Thierry when their army left — and this at the moment when these doctors were being exchanged.

These conditions obtained until the ninth of September, when the invaders again, as always, recoiled from their implacable foe, the Marne, pursued by the French and the British.

But Château-Thierry and the castle which watches the centuries flow by like leaves upon the bosom of the guardian river, still had to look once more—and may it have been the last time forever!—upon the faces of the enemies from beyond the Rhine. It was on the last day of May in 1918 that the hated field-gray uniforms again came creeping down the hillsides and into the streets. But now, beside their French antagonists of immemorial years, there stood to welcome them among the houses and along the shores of the Marne, a new foe; one which neither Charles Martel nor Charles v nor even Napoleon would have dreamed to see battling on the soil of Europe. And when, beneath the shells of Allied and German artillery which crossed above the roofs and crashed with shattering detonations into the narrow streets, there vibrated the rat-tat-tat of the guns of the American Seventh Machine-Gun Battalion, the Germans knew that behind the moat of the Marne the New World, too, was at bay in the name of civilization. For five long days they fought there, French poilus and Yankee doughboys behind mined walls and splintered trees and in hastily dug pits along the waterside, doggedly clinging to the positions they had been ordered to hold against the withering fire and oft-repeated attacks of men who hesitated at no effort or sacrifice to win their way across the narrow river which alone barred them from victory. By that time the Allied artillery and

infantry were firmly established on the hills to the southward, from which they were never to move until they moved forward in pursuit of the finally beaten foe.

It is from the western summit of the château hill, looking between the tree branches and past the rough-hewn tower of St. Crépin's Church, rising like a huge Druid's stone above the jumble of roofs almost at the foot of the hill, that the panorama reaches out over heaving crest and valley and knots of woodland blasted here and there by shell fire, to other fields which are now immortalized for Americans. Hill 204, its slopes mounting up from the Marne at the southwestern edge of the city, is conspicuous in the nearer distance, with the shapeless ruins of Vaux just beyond it. These were places for which the Germans fought furiously throughout the June and early July of the war, to finally lose the village to the Ninth United States Infantry, Second Division, and the hill to the Tenth French Colonial and Third American Divisions.

Northwest and farther away, just beyond the depression of the Gobert Creek, is the curving, dark outline of the famous Bois de Belleau, called now by the French the Bois de la Brigade de Marine, from which, in stubborn fighting throughout the month of June, 1918, the gallant marines and infantrymen of the Second American Division forced the Germans foot by foot down into the creek valley. Within the latter, just hidden from view by intervening hills, are the villages of Bouresches and Belleau and Torcy and those poppied wheat fields over which the men of the "Yankee Division" charged to victory on the misty morning of July 18. And there, also, a bright flash of color against the verdure of the renowned woods, are visible on a clear day the folds of Old Glory, floating above the white rows of crosses of

A "dug-out" and listening post in the famous Bois de Belleau

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the Belleau Wood cemetery, where rest the remains of 3,600 Americans killed in the fighting in that region of battles.

Northward of Château-Thierry, but hidden from the castle by the mounting hills and forests, are the open fields before Trugny and Épieds and the tangles of the Bois de Trugny — battle fields of the New Englanders. Beyond them lie the aisles of the Forest of Fére, and La Ferme Le Croix Rouge, set in the midst of it, where the Rainbow Division came into line, and, still farther away, the deadly slopes along the Ourcq where not only the Forty-second, but the Thirty-second and the Twenty-eighth Divisions wrote glory upon their standards. In fact, on every side of Château-Thierry is country which will be visited by patriotic pilgrims from the New World of generations yet unborn, for it was in this land that the sons of America gave their first virile aid to the cause of the Allies in the campaign which turned the tide of the war.

In the streets of the city itself the effects of battle were distressingly evident long after the armistice. The Rue du Maréschal Pétain and many other of the narrow streets were piled feet deep with the débris of ruined buildings and blocked by the Germans with barricades made of stones and the furniture from adjacent houses. In front of 27 Rue du Maréschal Pétain, just north of the bridge, was the barricade of their first line of resistance, facing upon the wide esplanade of the Champ de Mars. The handsome Hôtel de Ville lost one of its towers in the bombardments, though a little farther down the street the sixteenth-century belfry of the old Belhan Mansion escaped material injury, as did St. Crépin's Church on the Rue St. Crépin. The massive fifteenth-century tower of St. Crépin's has already been mentioned. The church is nobly conceived, with carved but-

tresses and a roof line of deep, saw-toothed gables, and its low groined interior and sixteenth-century organ loft, carved with figures of the prophetesses, are impressive.

When the French and Americans advanced into the city after the enemy's evacuation, they found in many places heaps of packing cases and sorted booty, systematically collected by the Germans from the stores and houses and much of it already marked for shipment to Germany. What they had not already carried away or prepared for transportation, they had wantonly destroyed or mutilated. This was attested by the condition of the interiors of scores of houses wherein mirrors hung broken and pictures slit on the walls, and upholstered furniture stood ripped open with bayonets, and polished tables hacked to pieces.

Gentler memories are stirred as one ascends the steep Rue de la Fontaine, at the western base of the château hill, and pauses at Number 13, where the light of day was first seen by the erratic son of Charles de la Fontaine, "master of waters and forests" of the Duchy of Château-Thierry, and his wife, Françoise Pidoux. Here one is reminded, too, of the fabulist's suzeraine and generous patroness of later years, who generally resided in Château-Thierry; Anne Mancini, Duchess of Bouillon and youngest of Mazarin's nieces; a young woman who was, according to Mignard's still-existing portrait of her, as lovely as she was gracious. Garbed to represent "the Muse of the Marne," in that portrait she is revivified down the years; "dressed to charm, her hair falling upon one white shoulder in Italian curls—a young woman, beautiful, darkly piquant, and vivacious." Is it any wonder that by such a creature her talented liegeman should have been inspired to write his collection of famous *Tales* and a large number of his imperishable *Fables?*

Going out of the principal, or northern, part of the city across the Marne bridge repaired with steel on the piers of the structure destroyed by the Americans, one comes to the row of shattered houses along the southern river bank wherein fought the Seventh Machine-Gun Battalion, and then, passing on across the "false Marne," or canal, which shortens the natural bend before the city, he enters the circular Place Carnot, where the American battalion commander, Major Taylor, made his post of command on the evening of May 31, 1918, in touch with his two companies, A, under Captain Houghton, and B, under Captain Mendenhall, which were fighting along the river bank.

In the *American Legion Weekly* (June 3, 1921) the author of this book wrote:

> Company B was assigned to the defense of the railroad bridge and the portion of the river bank lying in and immediately beyond the eastern section of the town. Company A took over the defense of the western portion, including the wagon bridge in the center of the city. The squads were conducted to their places by French officers or soldiers and the Americans spent the night in preparing their positions, receiving some German shell fire from the hills north of the Marne and an occasional burst of machine-gun fire from the lowlands nearer the river. For these detachments the serious work had not yet begun. But a handful of 14 men of Company A, under First Lieutenant John T. Bissell, had a wild night and following day on the north side of the river, where, with a few French Colonial troops who were holding on there, they engaged in continuous hot street fighting with the German advance guards.

So, with a last impression of it as a city all French, yet with an aroma of America now hovering about it perpetually, we must leave Château-Thierry, though with only a fragment of all its traditions and its romances told.

CHAPTER XX

FISHERMEN'S PARADISE

THE road through the southern outskirts of Château-Thierry is the direct one to Montmirail, but it is better to follow the Marne along its right shore as it curves southward past the base of Hill 204 and then leaves the edges of the little fields which drop down to the water from the outstrung dwellings of Essomes. The street of Essomes straggles aimlessly along the brooklet which cuts down between Hill 204 and the equally conspicuous elevation crowned by the Bois de Loup. Cruelly shattered by German shell fire in 1918, the exquisite parish church of the village, whose choir and transept are worthy of a cathedral, still preserves some of its richly carved stalls and wainscottings ranged along the rough stone walls, as well as the remarkable medieval sculpturing of the pulpit. Nor are other venerable monuments lacking in the quaint riverside village; a round stone tower with moss-grown, conical roof lifting above ramshackle poultry sheds and stables a chaste souvenir of a vanished abbey, and another tower, more dilapidated but not less picturesque with its deep doorways and windows, partly in ruins and its dense mantling of ivy, whose very name suggests the superstitions of olden times, "La Tourelle de l'Enfer." Here, also in its park bordering the river, is the war-wrecked but once charming château, La Collinette, belonging to M. Henri Dupont, in the basement of which Mlle Dupont maintained a canteen which will be remembered by many soldiers who passed through Essomes or camped there. In a place so near to Château-Thierry it was natural that American-army activities should exist, and the Quartermaster Corps operated for

some time in the village a coffee-roasting plant of huge capacity.

It was late on a still August afternoon when Paul and the writer passed down the meandering river road which skirts the base of the Bois de Loup through Essomes and Aulnois and Rouvroy. As we turned the sharp bend into Azy, couched, beside its bridge, opposite to the ribbon of water pouring into the Marne which is the mouth of the Dolloir, blue-black thunder clouds capped by dazzling peaks of silver and rose, were lifting high above the horizon. Then, like the vision of a dream, there broke suddenly upon our eyes an entrancing picture. It was the vale of Bonneil, carpeted, near at hand, by stretches of golden wheat stubble, over which at intervals stood the grain ricks, symmetrical as groups of tents. Beyond that rich foreground, mellowed by the sunshine and the long shadows of afternoon, the white walls and ruddy roofs of the village reclined as upon a divan on the hill slopes towering above it, gay with orchards and vines, while, over all, the dark forests of the crests glowed vividly against the stormy sky. At our left glinted the placid current of the Marne, its waters dividing to embrace the fairy-like island whose trees partly veiled the long walls and low roofs of La Ferme de l'Abbeye Château, dreaming beneath the hill of Chézy. Here was beauty and nature unscarred reposing in a peace as profound as if war had never been; yonder, just behind the hill of the Bois de Loup, was desolation and ruin indescribable. Dramatic contrast could not be more sharply drawn.

But the whole land is now become suddenly one of peace and, locally, at least, of plenty. The road, following the long sweeps of the river, winds south and then west again between the hills and the lowland meadows where poplars

and willows here and there wave their plumes above the water and where cattle graze among the deep grasses. White villages, each clustered about its guardian church tower, succeed one another at short intervals; Romeny and Le Pont and Saulchery near at hand and, beyond the Marne, the more considerable groups of Chézy and Nogent-l'Artaud, with great sweeps of agricultural land and at wide intervals the buildings of a farmstead, between them.

Nogent, which stands guard over the mouth of the Dolloir, became of a good deal of importance in the Middle Ages through the efforts of an able commoner, native of the place, who was later ennobled by the Count of Champagne and made lord of the seigniory. His tombstone is still to be seen in the parish church. The town today has corset and button factories as well as manufactories of optical instruments and it boasts a more curious industry in the dyeing of moss for use in funeral wreaths and bouquets of artificial flowers.

The peaceful valley broadens as we leave Saulchery behind and the well-tilled fields of the Orxois draw back to give place to levels of velvet verdure on both shores of the river, whose shining expanse rolls between, unshadowed by more than an occasional bush or low tree, the white towpath embroidering its right bank. Across the sunny fields presently appear the low, spreading outlines of a town evidently larger than any we have encountered since leaving Château-Thierry. It is Charly-sur-Marne, growing like a flower garden out of the gentle slopes along the Ru du Domptin where that little stream creeps down from the Orxois Hills below Coupru and La Ferme de Paris, and hence from ground very familiar to the rear echelons of the Second and Twenty-sixth American Divisions in the midsummer of 1918.

The Abbey Tower, Essomes

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Charly's main street unrolls its white ribbon toward Paris

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Charly's main street is, in truth, only the main highway, still unrolling its white ribbon toward La Ferté and Meaux and Paris. But far in the outskirts it assumes the appearance of a city street, with villas set in pretty gardens defining its course. The business section is concentrated at the crossing of the road which winds up the valley of the Domptin, but it is all quiet and unperturbed enough for such small factories as exist are situated well in the suburbs. There are quaint, musty byways in Charly, bordered by venerable houses with deep, embrasure-like doors and windows peeping out through the greenery and over the mossy walls, and there is an ancient hospice so buried among shrubs and trees that the very pathways which approach it seem scarcely able themselves to find it. Across the meadows by the riverside, a half-dozen or more wide, flat canal barges, like a flock of ungainly ducks, are usually riding lazily in the *port*, waiting their turn to go through the lock at one end of the dam whose wall of white water boils unceasingly over into the shallow channel below.

Calm once more after its exciting plunge, the river turns southward into the bend by which it encircles the hill of Poteron. Along the shore, caressed by tiny ripples, are to be found, as elsewhere on almost any afternoon of summer, the women of the adjacent villages kneeling on flat stones or strips of clean sand with baskets of soiled linen beside them, industriously washing. Along such reaches, also, though generally in more secluded spots well sheltered from the sun, are encountered the omnipresent French fishermen, seeking their supine relaxation from the cares of life in the same element to which the women resort for some of their most strenuous labors.

It was a fundamental tenet of faith among the American

soldiers that French fishermen fish and fish and fish and never catch anything. Whether or not this be strictly true, they certainly demonstrate, by their tireless persistence, the cardinal virtue of patience. Perhaps the infrequency of bites contributes to the air of meditative solemnity in which they are continually wrapped as they sit, rod in hand, with their feet stretched out upon a bank of greensward or dangling over the edge of a dock or a mossy stone wall, or else recline indolently upon the handrail of a bridge. Merchant or farmer, tired business man or poilu in horizon blue, all Frenchmen seem soothed to one mental attitude; to become members of one great, somnolent fraternity, when they fish. Whether the day be bright with sunshine or mistily dark with rain, an endless succession of them, more or less distantly spaced, brood like river spirits upon the face of the waters all the way from the meadows beneath the buttes of Langres and Chaumont to the embowered bends, darting with canoes and rowboats, that reflect the maritime cafés and villas of Bry and Chennevières, hard by Paris. Fishing is obviously one of the great sedatives of the French people and the Marne administers the soothing potion to its due proportion of the population.

In a carelessly elongated double row of shops and dwellings, Pavant stretches its length along the left bank of the Marne as the latter begins its swing of a full half-circle around the promontory of Porteron. Devoted, like its upriver neighbors, to the production of buttons and beads, the place, though seemingly so far removed from the world of fashion and all its thoughts, yet has added to its industries that of the fabrication of whalebone corset stays, for the use of milady of the Paris boulevards and the Riviera. Below Pavant the land becomes even more lovely as the Marne

descends toward the Department of Seine-et-Marne and the mouth of the Petit Morin. The hills swell in contours more gentle and their mantling of cultures, owing no doubt to the constant succession of sweeping bends molded between heights which present an infinite variety of exposures to the sun, become more luxuriant and varied in character. Viewed from the upland above Petit Porteron, the river, circling round Citry and Saacy, into the bend, still more acute, which almost leaves Méry-sur-Marne upon an island, suggests in miniature the curve of the Bay of Naples, the succession of towns that, like jewels, encompass the latter, being simulated by Crouttes and Nanteuil and Méry embroidering the skirts of the hills with their walls and gardens. Crouttes, which belongs still to the Department of the Aisne, reclines, as it were, upon the edge of a shell, its amphitheater of dwellings beneath the church tower looking across the Marne to the little plain, verdant with fruit orchards and woods and a checkerboard of cultivated fields, which encircles Citry.

Behind the latter and extending to east and west as far as the eye can see, a strongly marked line along the flanks of the southward hills is a feature of the landscape which is at first mystifying. It neither rises nor descends but following the same contour save when it cuts across a depression or penetrates beneath a summit, it preserves a winding but unbroken course in the direction of Paris. It is the Aqueduct of the Dhuis, which is almost as horizontal in fact as it appears to the eye, having a descent of only 60 feet in its length of nearly 82 miles.

Nanteuil, first village of Seine-et-Marne, lies on the right bank and attests by its comfortable homes to a population which is well-to-do and the reason is sufficiently evident in the vineyards occupying the sunniest hillsides all about it

and the neatly divided strips of farm land marking the level grounds. So with Méry, next of the Marne's fair daughters of buxom, rustic type, and then we meet with a surprise on crossing the river and discovering in Saacy a place which resembles a suburb of Paris in so far as concerns the making and vending of corsets, laces, sashes, ribbons, and embroidered military insignia. In small workrooms and shops no larger than they, but often fitted in metropolitan style with plate-glass fronts, several hundred skilled workers, most of them women, carry on at Saacy an industry whose products reach not only Paris but New York and San Francisco, and many other of the world's distant cities. It is curious to reflect that this orchard-walled hamlet, tucked away among the Marne hills, should contribute such articles of refinement to the wants of more or less luxurious city dwellers.

The modest little manufacturing center lies more than a kilometer south of the Paris-Metz Railroad, which crosses the river and plunges through a long tunnel under the peninsula on which Méry stands, to come out over another convex bend and then curve southward to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. But well north of the railroad the river itself follows its sinuous valley, in the head of which the long-flung streets of Ste. Aulde mark the right bank, white and clean and half-hidden behind the fruit trees that tumble down the hills in cascades of verdure. Around Ste. Aulde, the most important products of the orchards are prunes, while many fields are devoted to the growth of *petits pois,* the delicious French peas which all the world relishes.

Beside the highway cutting across the peninsula south of Ste. Aulde, Luzancy, charmingly situated upon the upper terraces of the vine-robed hills, adds its bit of color to the panorama of unfolding beauty. A great public property here is

devoted to the care of the anemic children of the eighteenth Arrondissement of Paris (Montmartre) and during the summer months these unfortunate little ones, in parties of about 200 at a time, are given the joy of spending a few weeks in this invigorating air and among these scenes of rural loveliness.

As the Marne drops southward, now, toward La Ferté, past the low, ample houses of Vaux whose hospitable doorways seem to invite the wayfarer to enter and rest; past lovely Chamigny beneath its gray and faded church tower, massive as the fragment of a fortress, round which

> *On either side the river lie*
> *Long fields of barley and of rye*
> *That clothe the world and meet the sky;*

past Reuil, where the grass lands, close cropped by troops of sheep, stretch to the river's margin as smooth as the lawns of a park, an expanding sense of the benign graciousness of the land steals warmly into the heart. Perhaps it is here, swaying in long, careless bends between the hills of the Orxois and the Brie, that the Marne is happier than anywhere else in its course. Now deeply green beneath the shadow of a shouldering hill, now azure under an undimmed sky, now shot with silver where a passing breeze skims its surface, now boiling impatiently over a dam, but always cheerful, always gentle, always dimpling with a thousand moods of merriment or pensiveness, the river is the gracious presiding spirit of the country, in all of whose beauties it is the perfecting element. There are no factories to darken its bosom with clouds of coal smoke or to soil it with their refuse, no rude cliffs to cramp its wanderings, nor canals to rob it of its own full flow of waters; only white villages to

smile upon it and green meadows to caress and the far, forested hills and over-arching sky to reflect. There is an amplitude, a tranquility, a sweet peace of well-being here which is the very essence of the spirit of the Marne. And to those who know and love it, that means something which is akin to the beauty and the peace of heaven.

CHAPTER XXI

DREAM COUNTRY

WHEN he set forth on his journey to the Rhine, Victor Hugo took passage in a diligence, which went bowling along the fine highroad through Claye and Meaux toward La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. But, for all the excellence of the road, a wheel of his vehicle presently broke. Then he abandoned it, changed to another which chanced to pass and continued his journey, perched upon the imperial between a hunchback and a gendarme, enjoying himself thoroughly what with their ingenuous conversation and the attractions of the landscape. He found the time perfect for traveling, and wrote:

> The fields are full of laborers, finishing the harvest and building immense stacks at different spots, which in their half-completed condition are not unlike the pyramids in ruins that are met in Syria. The ridges of corn are so arranged on the brow of the hills as to resemble the back of a zebra.

And, well content, the novelist came presently to La Ferté,

> . . . . a pretty little town, with its three bridges, its old mill supported by five arches in the middle of the river, and its handsome pavilion of the time of Louis XIII, which, it is said, belonged to the Duke of Saint-Simon, and is now in the hands of a grocer.

As Victor Hugo found it, so La Ferté remains, in great degree, today, but enlivened, it is true, by the presence of two railways; the Paris-Metz line which we have seen for so long threading the Marne Valley, and another which comes down the Petit Morin from Montmirail and joins the greater artery at La Ferté, even as the small river there

unites with the Marne. There are factories, too, at La Ferté but they never obtrude rudely upon the dreamy quiet of the place nor bring discordant features into the harmonies of white walls, dazzling streets and roadways and wandering blue waters gleaming out shyly from the luxuriant leafage of gardens and boulevards beneath the even greater waves of the hills rolling away on every side.

To men entering it in the olive-drab uniforms of the American Army several months after those uniforms had ceased to be everyday affairs in the lives of the inhabitants, La Ferté-sous-Jouarre gave most heart-warming sensations. Even along the country roads miles before the roofs of the city came into view, the cordiality of passers-by began to assume greater warmth and their smiles and salutations to seem more like those of personal friends. Arrived at the cozy little Hôtel de l'Epée, in the bustling center of the town, the marks of regard lavished upon Paul and the writer, despite the travel-worn appearance of their antique Ford, became, if possible, even more amicable. The hotel proprietor shook hands with us as we signed our identification papers, the porter sprang for our luggage as though we honored him in permitting him to touch it, the maids gazed upon us with liquid eyes as upon men who had just rescued them from sudden death.

Out on the sunny street, lined with bright shops, neat and cheerful, it was the same. Everyone smiled, many nodded and spoke, as to long-lost cousins. In nearly every trading place the owner or the clerks brought forth a few words of English for our delectation, spoken with a delicious accent and a bashful, almost tender, pride. It was market day in La Ferté and as the writer passed through the market place, crowded with shoppers and the carts and tiny stalls of the vendors of

skyward the superb Romanesque Tower of Guet, a buttressed relic of a thirteenth-century abbey, while in the empty Place that echoes to the feet of the occasional wayfarer, a hoary stone cross of the same epoch points the eternal way through the slow currents of time that lap the faded structures of old generations on every side. The church itself, though almost juvenile in comparison with the crypt which it guards, shows a charming interior with massive columns blossoming into the low groins of the ceiling and it shelters some rare stained glass of the sixteenth century and shrines of the thirteenth.

But the musty lore of ancient things is sharply displaced in the mind by an awakening sense of recent days when one catches a glimpse from the hilltop of the silver thread of the Petit Morin creasing its deep, narrow valley down through the uplands from the southeast, and recollections are stirred of that eighth of September, 1914, when the weary soldiers of Marshal French's British Army, restored to splendid energy by the prospect of forward fighting once more, struck the advanced elements of von Klück's hosts and forced them northward across this sluggish little vein of water and its more formidable trough of hills to finally reach the Marne bridges of La Ferté and win a passage across them against bitter opposition. All about the hill of Jouarre the British soldiers then swarmed, their coming saving the old town and the larger community at its feet from further molestation by the enemy.

The bridge on the Rue des Pelletiers, the chief business thoroughfare of La Ferté, was destroyed during the fighting of 1914 but its stonework has been replaced by not ungraceful steel arches, while the stone Pont Neuf, farther down stream, still casts the moving reflections of its sturdy piers

upon the bosom of the river. Just below the Rue des Pelletiers, on the right bank, occurs a succession of stately old mansions, their foundation walls descending sheer into the river and the boughs and vines of their gardens leaning out coquettishly to catch their own images in the bosom of the stream. Flowers and water grasses softly cushion the base of the wall, which here and there just above the water's edge is pierced by a massive, mossy door giving into the interior of one of the houses and suggesting midnight romance, lurking bravos, or stealthy elopements by the shining pathway of the Marne.

On the other shore of the river, squarely opposite to the dignified mansions of local aristocrats, like practicality set face to face with romance and staring it out of countenance, extends a long line of warehouses and not too obtrusive workshops, mainly the emporiums of concerns manufacturing or dispensing mill stones. Such stones, it is unnecessary to say, are among the most ancient implements employed by mankind in industry. They are made from a siliceo-calcareous rock of a peculiar rough texture adapted to grinding flour, deposits of which are found only in a few places in Europe and America. One of these deposits, and perhaps the largest is close to La Ferté, in the hills of Abymes and Tarteret, between the Marne and the Petit Morin. Here the slopes are furrowed by the great trenches of the quarries where for ages the rough stone has been taken out. The industry of preparing the stones for market was formerly of much greater volume than it is today, for other processes of making flour by improved mechanical methods have largely superseded the ancient practice of grinding, but the trade is still considerable and at la Ferté it gives employment to hundreds of workmen.

The city, however, is not wholly dependent for prosperity upon the millstone quarries. It possesses another flourishing industry in the handling of cheeses. Though far outranked by Meaux in the volume of its trade in this commodity, La Ferté has attained a standing in it which is due in no small degree to the efforts of one M. Georges Roger, who established here, on the hillside overlooking the railroad station, a laboratory in which he produced artificially the bacilli of fermentation which experience has proved to yield the best flavors in the different varieties of cheeses. The attainment of uniformly excellent results by the use of such bacilli, in place of the uncertainties of former haphazard methods, conquered the prejudices of even the conservative French farmer. Although in the vicinity of the city itself dairying is not much practiced, the cultivation of grapes and orchards being more profitable, the high plateaus of the Brie, the Orxois, and Multien produce large quantities of cheese a proportion of which finds its way to market through La Ferté.

It is the district called the Multien, defined quite vaguely in general but separated from the Haute-Brie and the Orxois by the Marne and the Ourcq and extending thence 15 or 20 kilometers west over St. Soupplets to form a sort of irregular triangle with Meaux at its base, which looks eastward toward La Ferté across the vast Marne bend, in the bight of which the Ourcq enters the parent stream. From La Ferté a straight raceway of the Marne flows down through gentle, open farming country to the head of this bend at Changis. At Sammeron and Uzy, the one on the left bank, the other on the right, the straight flow of the stream is interrupted by the leafy Ile-Notre-Dame, in whose tiny, shadowed coves lurk the flat-bottomed scows of fishermen and between whose feathered branches flash exquisite vistas of the ivy-clad Ro-

man church towers of the two villages, around which, on the meadows, one may

> *. . . . watch the mowers, as they go*
> *Through the tall grass, a white-sleeved row.*
> *With even stroke their scythe they swing,*
> *In tune their merry whetstones ring. . . . .*
> *The cattle graze, while, warm and still,*
> *Slopes the broad pasture, basks the hill,*
> *And bright, where summer breezes break,*
> *The green wheat ripples like a lake.*

Probably John T. Trowbridge sang of an American valley scene, but he sang as truly for one in the valley of the Marne, where, above Sammeron, the broad grain fields are enlivened in August by the harvesters, men and women, loading the bundles upon the two-wheeled wains, drawn by stout, cream-colored oxen, and building up the huge circular stacks which, when completed, are thatched with straw as carefully and systematically laid as the roof of a house. Here and there the smoke of a steam threshing engine drifts above the treetops, betokening peaceful industry in place of the smoke of batteries in action which filmed this landscape a few years ago. For this is a part of the region of which Edmond Pilon passionately and poetically wrote in his *Sous l'Egide de la Marne:*

> In September, 1914, also, it was autumn; September with its grain fields; September with its clustered grapes! And the days were fair and warm. In the furrows the quails ran; above the vineyards sang the thrush. The bumblebee, gorged with the booty of the flowers, droned in the air about the daisies and the little blossom clusters of the prairies, and the sky above the waters of the Marne between Meaux and La Ferté, was so blue, so pure, that one could well understand that this was, indeed, the country of tales; that pleasant land to which La Fontaine in his time returned without ceasing and from which the good Joinville departed only with great grief. It was an opulent country, exquisite, fecund; a country where the cricket chirps, of fair fields, of gorse-covered

Garden walls washed by the river, La Ferté-sous-Jouarre

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St. Jean-les-Deux-Jumeaux

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Ussy-sur-Marne from the meadows

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hills, of verdant grasses, of successions of farms where the growing things perfume the air and barnyard fowls scratch and maraud. Everywhere, on the roads, in the lanes, came and went the people of that "race sober and fine," of which Taine spoke.

The sky was so transparent, the air so light, that one could hear in the distance, above the flowers where the bees were flying, all at once in this quiet, in this calm and peace of nature, tranquillity of people and repose of flocks, as on a day of storm, a dull rumble, distant, prolonged. And here where the Huns had swept by, where Napoleon had passed, flying to Fontainebleau in haste, overwhelmed by fate, shaking his fist, his eagles baffled and brought low, sudden the Germans came pouring. . . . . Conquerors at Charleroi, having forced and ravaged northern France, they descended in an avalanche, and ahead of their host, as once ahead of Attila, arrested in Champagne by the same waters which had arrested him, they broke the millstones, pillaged the houses, seized hostages and, from time to time, along the wall of a farm shot down with rifles an old man or an infant.

M. Pilon perhaps had in mind, in his last statement, a murder of September, 1914, at Congis, where, as recorded by Mr. Toynbee,

. . . . the Germans arrested a man 66 years old near a spot called Gué-a-Tresmes, tied him to a cattle-tether and shot him — out of spite, because they found no money in his purse. After this murder the Germans prepared to set Congis on fire. "They stuffed twenty houses with straw and drenched them with petrol, but the arrival of the French troops fortunately prevented them from carrying out their purpose."

Congis, where the above revolting incident occurred, lies in a pocket of the valley just below the mouth of the Ourcq and it will soon be encountered in following the long bend of the Marne which, a few kilometers below Uzy, elbows its way between the two guardian villages of Changis, on the right bank and, on the left, a place whose name is verbal music — St. Jean-les-Deux-Jumeaux. Nor are the charms of the latter village confined to its name alone. With its winding, grassy streets, bordered by tumble-down, ivy-cov-

ered walls which are on terms of intimacy with the fruit trees leaning over them; its squat little church like a holy father seated meditatively by the roadside; its ancient, octagonal "dove-cote," molded with that rude artistry of stonework which modern tools of precision are utterly unable to imitate; its foaming dam flanked by the solid walls of the barge lock and the sloping cobbles of the watering place for cattle and horses below it, all modified by a not too prosaic touch of modernity in the long arches and battlemented coping of the bridge, massive as a Roman aqueduct, which conducts the highway across the Marne to Changis, it would be hard to find a place possessing at once more of the varied beauties typical of hamlets of the French countryside.

From St. Jean-les-Deux-Jumeaux the river sweeps round the amiable vale of Changis and thence east and north on its tortuous course of 24 kilometers to Trilport, disdainfully ignoring the short cut of 4 kilometers across the neck of the bend between the latter place and St. Jean. A fertile soil blesses all this demesne, wherein cattle and sheep abound, where stretches of grain billow over the uplands and beet and potato fields make vivid green patches on the bottoms, and whose every neatly walled farmstead is a producing center for the most far-famed of the Brie cheeses.

Over St. Jean-les-Deux-Jumeaux looks down through the fringes of the Bois de Meaux one of the romantic ruins of the Old World; that of the Château de Montceaux, built for Catherine de Medicis, the queen of Henry II, in 1547. It was later magnificently embellished by Henry IV and given by him to his beautiful favorite Gabrielle d'Estrées. It was there, at the Château de Montceaux, that early in the year 1596, Henry IV was visited by his ancient enemy of the Catholic League, the Duke of Mayenne, and there that the two

became warmly reconciled. Maximilian, Duke of Sully, related in his memoirs an amusing anecdote of the two, which occurred immediately after the completion of the formalities of their reconciliation. Walking into the gardens, the king took Mayenne by the hand

and began to walk him about at a very great pace, showing him the alleys and telling all his plans and the beauties and conveniences of this mansion. M. de Mayenne, who was incommoded by a sciatica, followed him as best he could but some way behind, dragging his limbs after him, very heavily. Which the king observing, and that he was mighty red, heated, and was puffing with thickness of breath, he turned to Rosny (Sully), whom he held with the other hand, and said in his ear, "If I walk this fat carcase here about much longer, then am I avenged without much difficulty for all the evils he hath done us, for he is a dead man." And thereupon pulling up, the king said to him, "Tell the truth, cousin, I go a little too fast for you; and I have worked you too hard." "By my faith, sir," said M. de Mayenne, slapping his hand upon his stomach, "it is true; I swear to you that I am so tired and out of breath that I can no more. If you had continued walking me about so fast, for honor and courtesy did not permit me to say to you 'hold! enough!' and still less to leave you, I believe that you would have killed me without a thought of it." Then the king embraced him, clapped him on the shoulder, and said with a laughing face, open glance, and holding out his hand, "Come, take that, cousin, for, by God, this is all the injury and displeasure you shall ever have from me; of that I give you my honor and word with all my heart, the which I never did and never will violate." "By God, sir," answered M. de Mayenne, kissing the king's hand and doing what he could to put one knee upon the ground, "I believe it and all other generous things that may be expected from the best and bravest prince of our age. . . . ."

After the death of Gabrielle, Henry gave Montceaux to the Queen, Mary de Medicis, who held many brilliant functions there. But it was neglected by her son, Louis XIII, while Louis XIV would have nothing to do with it whatever, preferring Versailles and Marly, so that the palace on which Italian architects had lavished all the arts of the Renaissance,

fell into a decay from which it was never rescued. Today, lost among the trees of the forest, a part of one stone pavilion, the skeletons of two towers framing a doorway, and another doorway formed between two moss-grown columns, are all that remain of the once enchanting rendezvous of royalty, beauty, wit, and valor. How perish the glories of the world!

Great, wind-swept hills of Orxois look down from the east side of the long Marne bend upon the *presqu'ile* of Armentières and Isles-les-Meldeuses, and the white and elegiac church spires of these hamlets, pricking above the treetops, are duplicated on the farther shore by those of Jaignes and Tancrou and Mary-sur-Marne. Cozy, smiling bailiwicks of the farmers of the neighborhood, these places in July, 1918, heard the thunders of the Allied advance on Belleau and Bussiares and Hautevesnes roll down the open slopes from the northeast, and a thin trickle of the blood so freely spilt there found its way into their quiet precincts.

It was on the hilltop a few hundred feet above the low-roofed cottages of Mary, with the links of the Marne coiling among the trees and grass lands far below, that the writer came, one afternoon, upon the village cemetery. The older portion, wherein "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep," is enclosed within a neat stone wall. But the terrible casualties of the first and second battles of the Marne, which had raged over all the surrounding country, had compelled an addition to even this isolated place of the dead, and just outside the wall were half-a-dozen rows of graves; all, apparently, at first glance, those of French soldiers. Each mound was neatly rounded and planted with bright flowers and at its head each was marked with a little tricolor flag and the black wooden cross bearing a tricolored rosette which is the

Lizy—tucked into the last bend of the Ourcq river

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Pomponne—with Lagny across the river

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The confluence of the Ourcq and the Marne

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The Château at Lizy-sur-Ourcq

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last tribute of France to her fallen sons. But a second glance discovered in one of the rows 5 white crosses, scattered between the black headboards of 21 poilus. They indicated the resting places of Lieutenant Arthur T. McAllister, of the Fifty-ninth United States Infantry and 4 enlisted men of the Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Infantry and the Tenth Machine-Gun Battalion, all of the Fourth Division. As shown by the legends on the crosses, all of these soldiers, French as well as Americans, met death on July 18, 1918, when the troops of the Eighth Infantry Brigade, Fourth Division, with those of the One Hundred and Sixty-fourth French Division, to which they were attached, attacked and carried Hautevesnes, Chevillon, and the Sept-Bois.

Laid here by the village cemetery of Mary-sur-Marne, far separated from the hosts of their fallen comrades who lie in large cemeteries exclusively American, the condition of these graves of Americans revealed as nothing else could the touching tenderness with which the French regard the memories of the New World allies fallen on her soil. On every American grave the flowers planted by the women of Mary seemed, if possible, more carefully tended than those on the French graves adjoining them, and at the head of each mound a small American flag fluttered in the same breeze which stirred the folds of the Tricolors three or four feet away. The caretaker of the cemetery, a white-moustached veteran of the war of 1870, stood reverently with us as we looked down upon the resting places of our dead countrymen, and at his side his little grandson, like the old soldier, straight, clear-eyed, serious, shared our mood with a depth of comprehension which no child could have felt who had not himself lived under the shadow of war. And beyond the crosses, white and black, sparkled in the distance the waters of the Marne,

that wondrous, impersonal incarnation of the immortal love of country which united the past of the veteran, the present of ourselves, and the future of the lad, and whose silver thread, by virtue of the mingled graves scattered all along its shores, today knits together in sentiment, let us hope for always, the hearts of France and America.

Both a highway bridge and a bridge of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est, the latter on the line following the Ourcq Valley from Meaux to Reims, cross the Marne in front of Mary. The original stone spans were blown up by the Germans on the eve of their retreat, September 8, 1914, and the superstructures have since been replaced by steel. Lines of trenches and machine-gun pits for a long time marked the river banks above and below the bridges, showing where the enemy vainly prepared to stand against the Franco-British advance.

For a time after the withdrawal of the Twenty-sixth American Division from the Marne counter-offensive, in the summer of 1918, Mary-sur-Marne was the headquarters of some of the echelons of the New Englanders. But it was at Lizy-sur-Ourcq, tucked, only a kilometer to the northwest, into the last bend of the Ourcq River before the latter mingles with the Marne, that there was far greater American activity when General George H. Cameron had there the headquarters of his division, the Fourth, while his troops were fighting under French command at Hautevesnes and Noroy. Therefore Lizy, like La Ferté, than which it is less than half as large, is a place where Americans are still regarded with more than casual interest. The crowd in the main street, which is narrow and, with its cobbled sidewalks and dingy, two- and three-story buildings, rather shabby in general appearance, gave us those sort of glances which need no spoken word to attest that they mean welcome. The

place, though old, has few monuments beyond the parish church and a certain quaint stone bridge. The latter, a relic of the twelfth century, spans the slender Ourcq with its narrow, round arches, pillared piers, and mossy stone railing, on a little-frequented woodland road just above the town. The church is a fifteenth-century edifice, having a roof line serrated, like that of St. Crépin's at Château-Thierry, with deep gables, and a square tower much broken by German shells, which may have been fired in 1914, when Maunoury and von Klück were fighting for the line of the Ourcq, or perhaps in July, 1918.

During the first battle, while the Germans remained in possession from September 3 to 9, Lizy suffered severely at the hands of pillagers. Mr. Toynbee relates:

> The contents of chemists' shops, ironmongers' shops, bicycle shops were loaded on motor-lorries and horse-wagons and hand-carts. "The most eager pillagers were men wearing the Red Cross badge. . . . . If one attempted to stop and watch them at work, they came and thrust their revolvers at one's chest." The Inspector of Gendarmerie at Lizy states that all the communes in his district were plundered in this thoroughgoing fashion, and the booty carried off in vehicles commandeered from the inhabitants.

A huge factory of ferronickel is about the only industry which Lizy can boast, though in the rich, rolling uplands of the Multien, to the eastward, are some of the largest farms of France, among them the great estates of Beauval and Echampeu, this region furnishing much Brie cheese to the market at Meaux. A sixteenth-century château, solid, but not large, and surrounded by a thickly wooded park, lends a touch of dignity to the environs of the typical country town. But the château was badly shattered during the days of the war and stands in pitiful need of repair in the midst of the park, grown unkempt from neglect.

It is a matter of perhaps 2 kilometers from the edge of Lizy to the mouth of the Ourcq, a spot which the writer was resolved to visit, if only for the sentimental interest attaching to the junction point of the two so historic rivers. With Paul teetering the wheel madly we went down a farm road pitching steeply and stonily into the valley of the Ourcq. The track grew narrower and fainter as we proceeded, trees and tall grass hedging it in, until it led us almost across the doorstep of a very small cottage buried in the woods. The face of a Frenchman, stricken with amazement at the sight, not to mention the very raucous sound, of an antique Ford rushing past his isolated domicile, stared out at us, and as we rattled on he was to be seen at his door, waving his arms and frantically shouting something to the effect that there was no road. He spoke truth. A few hundred yards more and we were brought to a halt by hummocks of water grass, and, clambering out, we pushed our way on foot through dense bushes and weeds a quarter of a mile farther, when our exertions were rewarded by our arrival on marshy ground beside the sluggish confluence of the two rivers.

Although scores of miles of the shores of both streams had witnessed some of the most desperate fighting of the great war, it is doubtful if the foot of either an Allied or a German soldier had pressed this soil, remote alike from roads, villages, and commanding ground. A water-logged scow lay moored to a slanting pole by the opposite shore of the Ourcq, and beyond it could be seen a road, cultivated fields and, some distance up the Marne, the roofs of Mary, low-eaved against the hillside. Down stream, Isles-les-Meldeuses, with its large power dam, was invisible behind the trees of a succession of little islands, but, on our side of the Marne, a great embankment against the hillside supported

with them when they retreated. On the first day of the retreat the hostages were forced to march 17 miles. Says *Michelin's Guide to the Battlefields of the Marne, 1914:*

> M. Jourdain, aged 77 and M. Milliardet, aged 78, taken away with only slippers on their feet, were the first to fall from exhaustion; they were shot point-blank. Soon after, M. Vapaillé suffered the same fate. The next day, M. Terré, an invalid, fell and was killed with revolver shots; M. Croix and M. Llévin stumbled in their turn and were also shot. All three were from 58 to 64 years of age. Finally, M. Mesnil, aged 67, utterly exhausted, gave in; his skull was smashed in with blows from the butt end of a rifle. The other hostages, better able to endure, held on as far as Chauny and were sent to Germany by rail. They were repatriated five months later.

Outrages of similar nature were committed in every village on the Goële Plateau which was occupied by the Germans during the battle. But let us turn from such horrors to subjects less revolting.

Although there are a number of large farms in the region around the rural community of Vareddes, it is an odd fact that many of them have been formed by the leasing to one proprietor of numerous almost unbelievably small holdings. It is said that around the town 800 hectares, or about 2,000 acres, of land are held in no less than 15,000 parcels, an average of less than one-seventh of an acre each. One farmer has contrived for his own use a farm of respectable proportions by buying or leasing 381 such parcels, while the public park of Vareddes, containing a little less than four acres of ground, was formed by uniting 31 individual bits of ground of which the largest was about one-fifth of an acre in extent, while the smallest contained 34 centiares, or about that number of square yards!

Such tiny holdings, when still in the hands of an individual proprietor, are devoted usually to the intensive culture of

garden vegetables. Sorrel for medicinal purposes is also cultivated, many mushrooms are raised in the abandoned galleries of rock quarries on the hillsides and there are, in places, rather extensive plantations of gnarled elms, the wood of which is fashioned, at a factory in Vareddes, into wagon-wheel hubs, though these articles are less used now than formerly.

The Marne makes the last southward sweep of its bend from Vareddes past Poincy and Trilport and then turns east to Meaux around the base of the pleasant Brie Hills whence flows the Ru des Cygnes, famous trade mark of Brie cheeses. On this tiny stream stand the villages, nurtured by fruit orcharding and dairying, of Fablains and Brinches, Vincelles and Routigny, the manufacturing town of Nanteuil-les-Meaux and that St. Fiacre where, in the year 670, died and was buried the hermit of that name, an Irish nobleman by birth, who lived in the adjacent forest under the protection of the Bishops of Meaux, clearing the land and planting fruit trees and thus becoming, after his canonization, the patron saint of gardeners in general and of the Brie in particular. It is an odd fact that the word *fiacre,* which was in common use before the extensive employment of automobiles as the name for the French hackney coach, was first applied to the vehicles that carried pilgrims from Paris to the tomb of the saint in the hills just beyond Meaux.

The Soissons-Meaux highway does not follow the Marne but strikes boldly across the hills, from whose crests a beautiful view of the city is outspread with the mass of St. Étienne's Cathedral overtowering it, and then descends into the streets through the eastern suburbs past patches of cultivation which gradually merge into the gardens along the Rue St. Nicholas.

CHAPTER XXII

MEAUX

IT IS a far cry down the ages from the twilight dawn of French history when Meaux, known to the Romans as Iatinum, was the capital of the minor Gallic tribe, the Meldi, to the present day, when, as a manufacturing center of no mean importance, it is the chief emporium of the rich Haute-Brie and Multien districts, a market of grain and preserved vegetables, and perhaps the largest center of France for the production and handling of flour and cheese. In the long interval between those two epochs, Meaux has seen the Romans pass from Gaul and the kingdom of Austrasia rise to dominion over the lands in which it lay. It saw the Normans come, burning and pillaging, in 865; paid tribute to the Counts of Vermandois and of Champagne; won its communal charter in 1179 and was joined to the royal domain a century later; experienced, owing to its perennial importance as a religious focus, eight great councils of prelates between the ninth and the sixteenth centuries; saw the Jacquerie cut down under its walls in 1356 by the French and English nobles; fell into the hands of the English in 1422 only to be rescued by the French seven years later under the divine stimulus of Jeanne d'Arc; suffered many sieges and disorders during the wars of religion, in which for a time it was the nerve center of Protestant activity; became famous as the episcopal seat of Bossuet, "the Eagle of Meaux," who almost drove Protestantism from France, and was laid under contribution by the armies of Germany and her allies in 1652, 1814-15, and 1870.

The history of Meaux is enriched by numerous memoirs

of those olden times, curious and moving. One which gives, perhaps as well as any other, a flavor of the precarious life of the medieval metropolis of the Brie, is the quaint account of Jean Froissart of the defeat of the Jacquerie, the miserable peasantry which in despair had revolted against the cruelties and exactions of the nobles during the black days of the reign of John II, in the Hundred Years' War. Said the faithful chronicler of the first half of that dreary struggle between France and England; himself, naturally, no democrat but an ardent believer in the rectitude of the feudal aristocracy:

At the time these wicked men (the Jacquerie) were overrunning the country, the Earl of Foix and his cousin, the *Captal* of Buch, were returning from a *croisade* in Prussia. They were informed, on their entering France, of the distress the nobles were in; and they learned, at the city of Châlons, that the Duchess of Orleans and 300 other ladies, under the protection of the Duke of Orleans, were fled to Meaux on account of these disturbances. The two knights resolved to go to the assistance of these ladies and to reinforce them with all their might, notwithstanding the *captal* was attached to the English; but at that time there was a truce between the two kings. They might have in their company about 60 lances. They were most cheerfully received on their arrival at Meaux by the ladies and damsels; for these Jacks and peasants of Brie had heard what number of ladies, married and unmarried, and young children of quality, were in Meaux; they had united themselves with those of Valois and were on their road thither. On the other hand, those of Paris had also been informed of the treasures Meaux contained and had set out from that place in crowds: having met the others they amounted together to 9,000 men and their forces were augmenting every step they advanced.

They came to the gates of the town, which the inhabitants opened to them and allowed them to enter; they did so in such numbers that all the streets were quite filled as far as the Market Place, which is tolerably strong, but it required to be guarded, though the river Marne nearly surrounds it. The noble dames who were lodged there, seeing such multitudes rushing toward them, were exceedingly frightened. On this, the two lords and their company advanced to the gate of the Market Place, which

they had opened, and marching under the banners of the Earl of Foix and Duke of Orleans, and the pennon of the *Captal* of Buch, posted themselves in front of this peasantry, who were badly armed. When these banditti perceived such a troop of gentlemen, so well equipped, sally forth to guard the Market Place, the foremost of them began to fall back. The gentlemen then followed them, using their lances and swords. When they felt the weight of their blows, they, through fear, turned about so fast they fell one over the other. All manner of armed persons then rushed out of the barriers, drove them before them, striking them down like beasts and clearing the town of them; for they kept neither regularity nor order, slaying so many that they were tired. They flung them in great heaps into the river. In short, they killed upward of 7,000. Not one would have escaped if they had chosen to pursue them farther.

On the return of the men-at-arms, they set fire to the town of Meaux, burnt it; and all the peasants they could find were shut up in it because they had been of the party of the Jacks. Since this discomfiture which happened to them at Meaux, they never collected again in any great bodies; for the young Enguerrand de Coucy had plenty of gentlemen under his orders, who destroyed them, wherever they could be met with, without mercy.

More fortunate in 1914 than during the time, a century earlier, when the Prussians and their confederates exacted huge tributes from the city and visited great indignities upon its people, Meaux did not suffer the blasting presence of the Germans except for a fleeting foray by some cavalry patrols which followed up the British retirement across the Marne bridges on September 2-3. In their retreat the British destroyed the floating wash-houses and boats on the river which might have served the enemy as pontoons, and blew up the Market Bridge and the foot bridge below it. But a week later they reentered the town, which, meanwhile, had been filled to overflowing with French wounded from the battle fields on the Goële Plateau. These unfortunates received priceless aid from the few inhabitants who had remained in the place and were effectively organized by the

heroic bishop, Mohseigneur Marbeau. A few shells fell in the suburbs but they did little damage and the charming old town, built around a U-shaped bend of the Marne, is therefore still intact today.

Elevated above the crooked and often narrow streets of the city, the Cathedral of St. Étienne, occupying a commanding site at the head of the Rue St. Rémy, is easily the outstanding landmark of Meaux. The edifice excited the discriminating admiration of the master of French letters, who gave his impression of it in a few words in *The Rhine.* Said Hugo:

> The cathedral is a noble-looking building; its erection was begun in the twelfth century and continued to the sixteenth. Several repairs have lately been made but it is not yet finished; for of the two spires projected by the architect, one only is completed; the other, which has been begun, is hidden under a covering of slate. The middle doorway and that on the right are of the fourteenth century; the one on the left is of the fifteenth century. They are all very handsome, though time has left its impress upon their venerable appearance. I tried to decipher the bas-reliefs. The pediment of the left doorway represents the history of John the Baptist; but the rays of the sun, which fell full on the façade, prevented me from satisfying my curiosity. The interior of the church is superb: upon the choir are large ogees, and at its entry two beautiful altars of the fifteenth century; but unfortunately, in the true taste of the peasantry, they are daubed over with yellow oil-paintings.
>
> To the left of the choir I saw a very pretty marble statue of a warrior of the sixteenth century. "(Philippe de Castille.)" It was in a kneeling position, without armor, and had no inscription. Opposite is another; but this one bears an inscription — and much it requires it, to be able to discover in the hard and unmeaning marble the stern countenance of Bénigne Bossuet. I saw his episcopal throne, which is of very fine wainscoting, in the style of Louis XIV. . . . .
>
> On going out of the cathedral I found that the sun had hid himself, which circumstance enabled me to examine the façade. The pediment of the central doorway is the most curious. The

inferior compartment represents Jeanne, wife of Philippe-le-Bel, from the *deniers* of whom the church was built after her death. The Queen of France, her cathedral in her hand, is represented at the gates of Paradise; St. Peter has opened the folding-doors to her. Behind the queen is the handsome King Philippe, with a sad and rueful countenance. The queen, who is gorgeously attired and exceedingly well sculptured, points out to St. Peter the *pauvre diable* of a king, and with a side look and shrug of the shoulder, seems to say:

"Bah! Allow him to pass into the bargain."

The uncompleted tower hidden under a covering of slate. which Victor Hugo remarked, is in the same state today as it was in his time. It is known as "The Black Tower." Although its condition destroys the symmetry of the church's exterior, the building is too majestic to be rendered ugly by even so serious a blemish. The one completed tower, whose great corner buttresses, sloping steeply upward, impart to it an appearance of almost Egyptian solidity, is so tall, 250 feet, that on clear days the heights of Montmartre and Mont Valerien, in Paris, may be seen from it. The body of the cathedral is 275 feet long and 105 feet high. The rose window over the middle one of the three ogival doorways contains exquisite old stained glass and the front of the edifice, especially about the doorways, is encrusted with delicate Gothic carvings and statuettes, much of the work sadly mutilated by weather, as the building was constructed of a very soft variety of stone. During the numerous disorders of which the church has been a witness, the hands of vandals have added much to the damage wrought by time. Another, smaller entrance of notably lovely sculpturing opens from the north off the choir upon the courtyard of the Chapter House. It is called the Porte Maugarni, immortalizing the name of a criminal who was hanged in front of it in 1372 by the bailiff of Meaux. The canons of the cathedral were

greatly incensed at this desecration of ecclesiastical ground and entered into a long lawsuit against the bailiff on account of it.

But, after all, the crowning glory of St. Étienne de Meaux resides in the extraordinary height and lightness of its interior. The superb clustered columns, rising unbroken from the floor to the spring of the roof groins and lending to the nave and the side aisles their awe-inspiring altitude, supported in the original church a series of vaulted galleries above the aisles, like those of Notre Dame de Paris. These galleries were removed about the end of the twelfth century, thus leaving the upper part clear.

The author of *Les Miserables* would have been thrilled to eloquence could he have seen, as the present writer was privileged to do, the interior of St. Étienne's decorated for the celebration of mass on September 7, 1919; the first anniversary of the first Battle of the Marne to occur after the close of the war. Conducted by several of the most distinguished French prelates and attended by eminent representatives of all the Allied powers and by a vast assemblage of people, many of them from Paris, this commemorative religious service saw the tall arches between the aisles and nave draped with tricolor bunting, and the lovely shrine of Jeanne d'Arc, in which The Maid, dressed in armor, is clasping her banner to her bosom, similarly decorated. But above and before all, from the narrow arches composing the mighty vault of the choir, depended great flags of the Allied nations, those of Great Britain and Italy at the sides and those of France and the United States in the center. Such a setting, on such an occasion, no American could ever forget, or recall without a thrill of pride.

The pulpit from which Bossuet preached as many eloquent

sermons as he delivered before the court of Louis XIV, is still, in reconstructed form, the pulpit of the cathedral, standing at the right of the altar; his tomb, marked with a black marble tablet, is in the choir, and the spirited monument to him, executed by the sculptor, Ernest Dubois, in 1907, stands in the north aisle near the main entrance. The fiery preacher, who was said to be the only living man able to impress Louis XIV with any sense of moral or religious obligation, is represented in his priestly robes, preaching with upraised hand. Below him is the symbolic eagle, with outspread wings, and at the foot of the pedestal are the figures of five great personages whose lives were profoundly influenced by Bossuet. They are, Marshal Turenne and the Prince of Condé, the brilliant military leaders of the epoch of French triumphs under Louis the Magnificent, of whom the former was converted by Bossuet while the latter was his intimate friend; Mlle de Lavallière, also converted by "the Eagle" and turned nun after she had been supplanted in the affections of the king by Mme de Montespan; Henrietta, Queen of England, whose death inspired Bossuet to one of his most eloquent funeral sermons, and the Dauphin, Louis, whose tutor the great churchman had been.

Meaux, especially in its ecclesiastical precincts, is, indeed, overshadowed by the memory of Bénigne Bossuet, who dominated the spiritual affairs of France during his lifetime, which ended in 1704, almost as completely as his royal master dominated its political existence. Hard by the cathedral is the episcopal palace, where he, as well as many other bishops before and after him, lived and worked, for it dates from the twelfth century though it was altered in the sixteenth and seventeenth. One of the chief points of interest is the little pavilion known as "Bossuet's Study," on the site of

a tower of the ancient fortifications whose line is now occupied by the terrace of the handsome palace gardens. This pavilion is said to have been his favorite retreat when he was in Meaux and here he composed many of his sermons and sometimes slept and ate when engrossed in an important piece of work.

Another bishop than Bossuet is credited with having built the inclined plane that leads from the ground to the second floor of the palace, desiring, so the story goes, to ascend to his apartments without dismounting from his mule! In this building with its simple roof lines and windows, its arched doorways and balcony on the side of the garden supported by nine chaste arcades, are rooms of fine Renaissance architecture, some of them containing tapestries, paintings, and sculptures of very great value. Two of these rooms on the second floor were occupied by Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette on their return from Varennes. In the same room which was then used by the king, Napoleon slept on the night of February 15-16, 1814, during the campaign before Paris and it was again occupied by royalty in 1828, when Charles X lodged there. In 1870, General von Moltke stayed once in the palace during the German advance into France, saying while there, "In five days, or a week at most, we shall be in Paris," forgetting the possibility of a siege.

Just behind the bishop's palace and close to the right rear end of the cathedral, stands a quaint old stone building with tiny, deep windows, an oddly sloped roof at its southern end and a round turret at the opposite extremity. Its most rare and attractive feature, however, is the one described by Victor Hugo, who, in spite of his omnivorous hunger for information, seems not to have learned the name or character of the building.

To the right, on entering the town, is a curious gateway leading to an old church — the cathedral; and behind it an old habitation, half fortification, and flanked with turrets. There is also a court, into which I boldly entered, where I perceived an old woman who was busily knitting. The good dame heeded me not, thus affording me an opportunity of studying a very handsome staircase of stone and woodwork, which, supported upon two arches and crowned by a neat landing, led to an old dwelling. I had not time to take a sketch, for which I am sorry, as it was the first staircase of the kind I had ever seen.

This building is the Chapter House of the cathedral and it was originally erected sometime in the thirteenth century as a granary, being afterward altered to a dwelling place for the canons of the cathedral. Its outside staircase, as might be conjectured, is famous among archæologists.

The straight, narrow street of La Cordonnerie leads steeply down from the cathedral upon the Quai Victor Hugo, from the balustrade of which one commands a view of the whole abrupt bend of the Marne within the city; the bridges, overshadowed by their remarkable old mills, above; the attractive promenades of the Trinitaires and the Place Lafayette, shaded by huge old trees, below, and, across the river in the peninsula, the trade and manufacturing section hinging upon the market place and the Rue Cornillon, with the Cavalry Barracks in the background. On the point of the peninsula, surrounded on three sides by the river, once stood the Roman fortress of Iatinum, which was later succeeded by other fortresses protected on their fourth side by a moat across the peninsula, now converted into the Canal de Cornillon. The district, once all martial, is today given to less impressive but more remunerative uses, for it is in and around the Place du Marché that the city's enormous trade in Brie cheeses is conducted, and on market days it is thronged with farmers from all over the surrounding country.

Scarcely less striking than the cathedral and, in a sense, even more rare and curious, were the ancient mills of the Market Bridge, which withstood the blowing up of that structure in 1914 only to fall prey to a conflagration in 1920. In losing these mills, together with several millions of francs worth of flour and grain, Meaux was robbed not only of its most picturesque group of buildings but of a great share of one of its chief industries, for the mills of Meaux supply Paris with the greater part of its flour. Dating from the sixteenth century and built entirely across the bed of the river, the old mills rested upon a number of irregularly planted groups of piles; a favorite device of the middle ages for utilizing water power. Half-a-dozen buildings of entirely different types of architecture but all five or six stories high and all made of wood, some of them strikingly timbered, stood huddled along the bridge. Roofs of flat or pointed tiles laid at every imaginable angle, gables, chimneys, exterior additions clinging like turrets to the sides, projecting joists and pieces of wall, gave to the mills an extraordinarily fantastic appearance, while below them the great wheels foaming through the green river waters added an illusion of motion to their grotesque bulk which made them seem almost like strange, myriad-legged monsters slowly wallowing up the channel of the Marne. Another set of four mills, built halfway out on the Pont de l'Échelle, several blocks below the older ones, are far less curious than the latter, having been rebuilt in 1845, in stone set upon stone piers.

A Hôtel de Ville of the dignified architecture usual to French public buildings, and a small but excellent museum and public library connected therewith, a number of handsome modern residences in the suburban district along the

The charming old town of Meaux

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The ancient mills and the ruins of the Market Bridge, Meaux

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Charenton, where the Marne enters the Seine

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The placid river at Chelles

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Chaussée de Paris, some fine monuments of the present era to notable men of the city in the pretty parks and along the Boulevard Jean Rose, which traces the line of the old fortifications, all leave in the mind of the visitor a pleasant impression of Meaux in its rôle as a modern city, while the flavor of antiquity lent by the cathedral and the mills is heightened by the old houses here and there dotting the narrower thoroughfares of ancient origin.

Officially, Meaux was never much of a center for the activities of the Americans in olive drab of war times, for the reason that it was far to one side of the duly defined American areas. In point of fact, however, from June until September, 1918, it was thronged with those who were about the business of the United States divisions fighting along the upper Marne, on the battle line between Château-Thierry and Soissons, and, finally, along the Vesle. It was the headquarters of our Third Army Corps, under Major General Robert Lee Bullard, before the counter-offensive of July 18, and at Meaux a large number of the troops of the "Yankee Division" celebrated July 4, 1918, with a parade, an athletic meet and a band concert. Few who were in the city on that or other occasions will soon forget the grateful shade trees of the Trinitaires along the river shore, or, looming against the sky, the heavy cathedral tower with the pigeons circling about it. For Meaux, although in this motor age almost a suburb of Paris, has a charm which is all its own. It carries itself proudly, too, and seems, as Victor Hugo said, "to be proud that Meaux is not Paris."

CHAPTER XXIII

ILE-DE-FRANCE

AMONG the country folk about Trilport there is a saying still extant, handed down from the Middle Ages, that when they cross the Marne at that place on the way to Meaux, they are "going into France." It is to be presumed that in using the phrase in the old days, people meant by it that they were going into the province of Ile-de-France, whose eastern limits ran somewhere near Meaux. It is through the heart of that region that the Marne flows from the city of Bossuet until it enters the Seine at Paris.

A pleasant, poplar-shaded road conducts one out past the Trinitaires and southward by the Apple-Tree Mill, lying picturesquely on an arm of the river, to the square of the manufacturing village of Villenoy, beneath its three tall lime trees. A huge beet-sugar factory, one of the largest in France, with two tall chimneys, lies close to the Marne shore, while sawmills and other industrial plants surround the village, whose only center of beauty is its parish church, Ste. Aldegonde's. It was erected in 1648 by the then Bishop of Meaux, Monseigneur Seguier. It contains some excellent paintings and stands in the middle of the parish cemetery, whose graveled walks are bordered with hedges of boxwood so tall that they hide the time-worn tombs behind them.

Across the river below Villenoy, Mareuil-les-Meaux, and Voisins lie couched on the hill slopes and just below the latter, the river, in one of its characteristic curves, turns northward again past Isles-les-Villenoy, where the railroad to Paris crosses it on a long bridge. The great spur of the Brie Hills that cuts off the Marne Valley from that of the Grand

Morin ends abruptly above Condé-Ste.-Libiaire, leaving extended before it a valley encircled by the Marne in a bend almost as far-flung as the one between St. Jean-les-Deux-Jumeaux and Trilport.

It was to an old farmhouse which she remodeled to suit her own tastes, standing exactly on the summit of this spur of the Brie Hills, that Mrs. Mildred Aldrich, the American writer, came in the spring of 1914, "to seek," as she said, "a quiet refuge and settle myself into it, to turn my face peacefully to the exit, feeling that the end is the most interesting event ahead of me — the one truly interesting experience left to me in this incarnation." And then, as if specially to prove to her the whimsical temperament of Fate and the folly of predicting, in any situation, that the "interesting experiences" of life are over, there came and spread itself on the vast stage beneath her very door, the first battle of the Marne, which she, from her viewpoint of it, so graphically and movingly described in her little book, *A Hilltop on the Marne.* French and British, even German, soldiers — for she was in the very No Man's Land of the fray — came and went about her house, and with her glasses she followed the smoke clouds and the flashes of the guns which gave evidence of the fierce fighting on the plateau north of Meaux. We will quote nothing of Mrs. Aldrich's fascinating story of those nerve-straining days of battle, but her description of the lovely scene extending on every side from her hilltop at the time of her first arrival there, is too graphic and too pertinent to our journey down the Marne to be omitted. Under date of June 3, 1914, Mrs. Aldrich wrote, in a letter to her relatives in America:

> I am sure that you — or for that matter any other American — never heard of Huiry. Yet it is a little hamlet less than 30 miles

from Paris. It is in that district between Paris and Meaux little known to the ordinary traveler. It only consists of less than a dozen rude farmhouses, less than five miles, as a bird flies, from Meaux, which, with a fair cathedral, and a beautiful chestnut-shaded promenade on the banks of the Marne, spanned just there by lines of old mills whose water-wheels churn the river into foaming eddies, has never been popular with excursionists. There are people who go there to see where Bossuet wrote his funeral orations, in a little summer-house standing among pines and cedars on the wall of the garden of the Archbishop's palace, now, since the "separation," the property of the State, and soon to be a town museum. It is not a very attractive town. It has not even an out-of-doors restaurant to tempt the passing automobilist.

My house was, when I leased it, little more than a peasant's hut. It is considerably over one hundred and fifty years old, with stables and outbuildings attached whimsically, and boasts six gables. Is it not a pity, for early association's sake, that it has not one more? . . . .

But much as I like all this, it was not this that attracted me here. That was the situation. The house stands in a small garden, separated from the road by an old gnarled hedge of hazel. It is almost on the crest of the hill on the south bank of the Marne — the hill that is the water-shed between the Marne and the Grand Morin. Just here the Marne makes a wonderful loop, and is only fifteen minutes' walk away from my gate, down the hill to the north.

From the lawn, on the north side of the house, I command a panorama which I have rarely seen equaled. To me it is more beautiful than that we have so often looked at together from the terrace at Saint-Germain. In the west the new part of Esbly climbs the hill, and from there to a hill at the northeast I have a wide view of the valley of the Marne, backed by a low line of hills which is the water-shed between the Marne and the Aisne. Low down in the valley, at the northwest, lies Ile-de-Villenoy, like a toy town, where the big bridge spans the Marne to carry the railroad into Meaux. On the horizon line to the west the tall chimneys of Claye send lines of smoke into the air. In the foreground to the north, at the foot of the hill, are the roofs of two little hamlets — Joncheroy and Voisins—and beyond them the trees that border the canal.

On the other side of the Marne the undulating hill, with its wide stretch of fields, is dotted with little villages that peep out of the trees or are silhouetted against the sky-line — Vignely, Trilbardou,

Penchard, Monthyon, Neufmontier, Chauconin, and in the foreground to the north, in the valley, just halfway between me and Meaux, lies Mareuil-on-the-Marne, with its red roofs, gray walls, and church spire. With a glass I can find where Chambry and Barcy are, on the slope behind Meaux, even if the trees conceal them.

But these are all little villages of which you may never have heard. No guidebook celebrates them. No railroad approaches them. On clear days I can see the square tower of the cathedral at Meaux, and I have only to walk a short distance on the *route nationale* — which runs from Paris, across the top of my hill a little to the east, and thence to Meaux, and on to the frontier — to get a profile view of it standing up above the town, quite detached, from foundation to clock-tower.

This is a rolling country of grain fields, orchards, masses of black-currant bushes, vegetable plots — it is a great sugar-beet country — and asparagus beds; for the Department of the Seine-et-Marne is one of the most productive in France; and every inch under cultivation. It is what the French call *un paysage riant,* and I assure you, it does more than smile these lovely June mornings. I am up every morning almost as soon as the sun, and I slip my feet into *sabots,* wrap myself in a big cloak and run right on to the lawn to make sure that the panorama has not disappeared in the night. There always lie — too good almost to be true — miles and miles of laughing country, little white towns just smiling in the early light, a thin strip of river here and there, dimpling and dancing, stretches of fields of all colors — all so peaceful and so gay, and so "chummy" that it gladdens the opening day, and makes me rejoice to have lived to see it. I never weary of it. It changes every hour and I never can decide at which hour it is the loveliest. After all, it is a rather nice world.

Now get out your map and locate me. You will not find Huiry. But you can find Esbly, my nearest station on the main line of the Eastern Railroad. Then you will find a little narrow-gauge road running from there to Crécy-la-Chapelle. Halfway between you will find Couilly-Saint-Germain. Well, I am right up the hill about a third of the way between Couilly and Meaux.

It is a nice historic country. But for that matter so is all France. I am only fifteen miles northeast of Bondy, in whose forest the naughty Queen Fredegonde, beside whose tomb, in Saint-Denis, we have often stood together, had her husband killed, and nearer

still to Chelles, where the Merovingian kings once had a palace stained with the blood of many crimes, about which you read, in many awful details, in Maurice Strauss's *Tragique Histoire des Reines Brunhaut et Fredegonde,* which I remember to have sent you when it first came out. Of course no trace of those days of the Merovingian dynasty remains here or anywhere else. Chelles is now one of the fortified places in the outer belt of forts surrounding Paris.

In her gracious description, Mrs. Aldrich has told so much of the *paysage riant* lying between Meaux and Lagny that not a great deal remains to be added to it; nothing, certainly, to add to the sense of its charms. The villages, whose musical names sing like strains from some ballade of the troubadours — Vignely and Trilbardou, Charmentray and Précy and Annet-sur-Marne — dreaming along the shores of the slumberous river, have really few distinguishing features beyond the winsome charm which clings like a perfume, to every Marne village. Though almost within sound of the whistles of Paris, not yet is the sweet rusticity of the river's wanderings spoiled in the smallest degree by proximity to one of the world's greatest capitals.

At Esbly, where the canal crosses the peninsula of the Marne and where the railroad from Crécy, coming down the Grand Morin, joins the Paris-Metz line, there is growing up, it is true, beside the gray and still sequestered old village, a new town of villas and suburban cottages where, in charming rural surroundings, dwell city folk attracted thither by the frequent train service which enables them to go daily to their work in Paris. Old Esbly boasts a monument to the memory of one of her sons of whom she is justly proud, Major Berthout, an army officer of high intellectual attainments who lost his life in the colony of Tonkin while engaged in the task of mapping that country.

A canal, starting at Meaux and designed to shorten by 16 kilometers the journey of barges, by cutting off the meander north of Esbly, makes a termination in the Marne at the west side of this bend, between the hamlets of Lesches and Chalifert. Its final course over the neck of the peninsula is favored by a peculiar configuration of the ground. Owing to the fact that the Grand Morin comes down past Esbly and, amid groves of poplars, enters the Marne hard by it, there is across the neck of this peninsula, instead of the tongue of high land usually occupying such a point, a valley so much lower than the adjacent surface that it is almost a marsh. On either side of the canal the low, damp soil is planted to a luxuriant forest of poplars belonging to the commune of Lesches, the village whose cottages stand at the head of the small valley under a wooded crest robed with vines. This crest, sloping easily to the borders of the Marne, is crowned by the Château of Montigny.

Of all the places near the mouth of the Grand Morin, Condé-Ste. Libiaire alone preserves, in its name, the recognition of the ancients of this meeting place of waters, Condé being a corruption of the Gallic word *condate,* meaning, confluence. North of Esbly, hiding its wanderings, if possible, even more shyly than it does in more remote regions, the Marne reflects the rural center of Charmentray, and Précy, where basket-work flourishes, and then stretches protecting arms about the sandy vale of Jablines, dotted with grain shocks and stacks of golden straw. Coupvray, between Esbly and Chalifert, looks down upon rich soil once belonging to the ducal family of Trevise, whose ancestral château still dominates them from the summit of the near-by hills. Chicory, much used in the north of France, and endive, lux-

uriate on these grounds, whose farms are well cultivated and good to look upon.

In the square of Coupvray stands a bust upon a modest pedestal which commemorates the features of a man, native to the village, whom thousands of unfortunates all over the world have blessed and still bless with the fervent gratitude which they might bestow upon a saint. The bust was erected by the students, whom he had trained, to Louis Braille, born in Coupvray in 1809; the genius who, blinded himself at the age of three years, invented the Braille system of printing for the blind by means of raised letters, thus lighting the lamp of knowledge in the brain for those for whom the lamp of the sun has been forever extinguished.

Across the deep-embowered valley of the Grand Morin, Mrs. Aldrich's "hilltop on the Marne" looks to another hilltop swelling above Montry and Coupvray. This gentle eminence bears up the Château of Haute-Maison, "with its mansard and Louis XVI pavilion;" the building in which Jules Favre held his first conference with Prince Bismarck on September 18, 1870, while the German armies were encircling Paris, and France was in chaos. To the château, which belonged in 1591 to the noble family of Reilhac, Bismarck was conducted by an old French soldier named Hoppert, after having declined to meet Favre in the humble cottage of the veteran. The latter, distrustful of the Germans, would not leave his home with Bismarck until the latter had placed a guard over it.

In his discussion with the Iron Chancellor at the château, Favre stood out bravely against the inflexible German, who, expressing his eager covetousness in rude words and harsh voice, demanded booty and ransom so huge that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs indignantly refused to consider

such terms. But a few months later, alas! Paris taken, and France brought to her knees, the new republic was obliged to accede to conditions even more humiliating. It is consoling to reflect that forty-four years later in this same valley and again in September, a German officer was obliged to write in his diary of a superior who had aspired to emulate Bismarck; "Caught sight of von Klück. His eyes, usually so bright, were dull. He, who was wont to be so alert, spoke in dejected tones. He was absolutely depressed."

Like a child, weary of its long play at hide-and-seek among the laughing hills of Orxois and Brie, at Chalifert the gentle Marne turns westward as if treading the path toward home and, with scarcely another turn, rolls on into the very eastern suburbs of Paris. At Lagny it is that one first senses the nearness of the great city. The river valley above it, framed between the orchards and vines of the hillsides, encompasses Chessy and Montevrain on the south shore and Dampmart on the north; smiling suburban places whose villas, set in ample lawns, the homes of country-loving Parisians, form a pleasant avenue leading above the river to Lagny. Even the railroad bridges and the medievally massive Aqueduct of the Dhuis, which, after its long journey beside the Marne, crosses it above Dampmart to find a more northerly route into Paris, add to the beauty of the landscape by their fairly proportioned arches of chiseled stone.

The river front of Lagny, always peopled by canal boats sparred out from the shore and connected with it only by long, narrow landing planks, looks upon the little capital of this part of the valley between arching trees and past riverside residences which are often elegant and always comfortable. The town, of a population of 7,000 people, counting those in Thorigny and Pomponne, directly across the river,

was the Latiniacum of the Romans and it has had a checkered history. It was burnt by the English in 1358, pillaged by the Duke of Lorraine in 1544, and captured in 1591 by King Henry IV from the Duke of Parma. At its very center, Lagny exhales a perfume of antiquity, a curious fountain of the Middle Ages, bearing a Latin inscription and called the Naiad's Fountain, playing its jet of water in the midst of the market place, itself the old "Place du Marché aux Bles," appropriate to a town of the grain country. Near by is the quaint old Church of St. Furcy, long since given to secular uses, with curtains fluttering in the latticed windows beneath the beautifully carved ogival façade, which, set between two pinnacled turrets and heavy buttresses, rises high above the doorway wherein stand the tables of a modest café. St. Furcy's is the last relic of a famous abbey founded by the Irish monk of that name at Lagny in the seventh century.

A more imposing ecclesiastical structure is the early Gothic Church of St. Pierre, near the market place. It is really the choir only of an abbey church designed in the thirteenth century to be one of the most vast in France, but never completed. With its handsome radiating chapels, however, the noble fragment is alone large enough to accommodate all the worshipers who ever assemble there.

On the Pomponne side of the river, along the hill slope which is topped by the delightful park and Bois de Pomponne, much fine fruit is produced for the Paris markets, the garden of one M. Mottheau, in particular, having acquired a high reputation for the magnificent pears and apples which are raised there by the methods of arboriculture practiced in the Gardens of the Luxembourg. Situated upon the sunny slope above the railway station, with Lagny outspread across the river, the orchards of M. Mottheau are enclosed in walls and

cross-walls which are equipped to hold straw mats and sliding roofs of tiles for the protection of blossoms and young fruit in the time of late spring frosts or other inclement weather. The pear trees are trained against the walls in many symmetrical designs such as lozenges, candelabra, palm leaves, urns, etc., and the production of each tree, apple as well as pear, is confined to a very few carefully nurtured specimens of fruit. Naturally, fruit produced by such painstaking and costly methods finds its way only to the tables of the best hotels and the homes of wealthy families.

Dimpling again for a space through a bit of valley remote from the traffic of highway or railroad, and smiling back at St. Thibault-des-Vignes, Vaires, and Torcy, the river approaches Noisiel but before reaching there is broken into two channels by a long, narrow island, leafy as always, the upper end of which is graced by the "Mill of the Isle," and the lower end by the abandoned "Mill of the Moat." Approached from the shore by a mossy stone causeway, the empty wheel chute of the Mill of the Moat bestrides an arm of placid water which reflects as in a mirror the gray stone piers, framing a vista of woodland greenery, the upper stories of plaster and decaying, close-set timbers, and the branches of the forest trees that hedge it in.

Perhaps the Mill of the Moat and the Mill of the Isle were in the mind of the eccentric, nature-loving poet, Gerard de Nerval when he wrote,

> *I love Chelles and her water-cress beds*
> *And the soft tick-tack of the mills,*

for Chelles, looking down over long cascades of treetops from the hills north of Noisiel, is only a short distance away.

At Noisiel we are again in a modern manufacturing

town, with a multitude of workmen's cottages ranged along straight streets, much as in an American town of similar character. The whole life of the place revolves about the huge chocolate manufactory of Menier. The substantial and well-arranged buildings of this company, whose signs are familiar sights in every French village and railway station and whose product was eagerly sought by millions of Allied soldiers during the weary days of the war, stretch for a great distance along the shore of the Marne, interspersed with pretty gravel paths and flower beds.

Noisiel is modern and devoid of interesting traditions but it is far different with Chelles, lying on the north side of the river beneath the grim but no longer formidable walls of Fort de Chelles, first unit of the outlying *enceinte* of defenses about Paris which the Marne approaches in its course. As Mrs. Aldrich related in her *Hilltop on the Marne,* Chelles was the seat of a palace of the Merovingian kings, and the Forest of Bondy, northwest of it, is the place where, according to legend, Queen Fredegonde in the year 673 accomplished the murder of her husband, Chilperic I, by having him assassinated as he was dismounting from his horse after a hunting excursion. This resourceful, if not too scrupulous, lady, who was only one of several wives of Chilperic, during her career of crime likewise succeeded in compassing the death of all the numerous progeny of the other royal consorts, thus leaving the dynastic coast clear for her own children, none of whom, however, appear to have been worth the trouble she had taken on their behalf.

The palace, which was the royal residence of three Merovingian kings and was later used by Robert the Pious, second of the Capetians, was abandoned under the latter dynasty and fell into a decay of which not even ruins remain today. The

Le Moulin de Doubes, Noisiel

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adjacent abbey, however, a great religious institution founded by Ste. Clotilde, wife of Clovis the Great, endured from the sixth century until the eighteenth, when it, together with the tombs of the numerous princesses who had been its abbesses, was utterly destroyed in the Revolution. Some reliquaries, containing bones of Ste. Bertille and Ste. Bathilde, of whom the latter, wife of Clovis II, had had the place rebuilt in the seventh century, and some wood carvings still to be seen in the church of Chelles, alone survived that demolition.

Louis XIV, during the brief period in which he was infatuated with the lovely and unfortunate Mlle de Fontanges, conferred the almost royal dignity of Abbess of Chelles upon her sister, and it was in this retreat that Mlle de Fontanges sought a refuge after she had become distasteful at court. She arrived, so wrote Mme de Sévigné,

> . . . . with four coaches of six horses each, her own with eight; the beneficiary of a yearly income of 40,000 ecus (about 120,000 francs), but, wanting the heart of the king, which she had lost, bloodless, pale, changed, bowed down with sadness. I do not think that I have ever seen an example of a woman at once so fortunate and so unfortunate.

The present town of Chelles, especially along the main thoroughfare of the Boulevard de la Gare, with its shade trees trimmed square like boxes set on posts, is virtually Paris in appearance as truly as the Marne in front of it, winding between little islands and past the Moulin Baviere, is still the placid, sylvan, heaven-reflecting Marne of Bassigny and Champagne and the Brie. At Gournay, on the river bank, which has a railway station in common with Chelles, and near which the Marne leaves the Department of Seine-et-Marne and, for a very brief span, enters that of Seine-et-Oise, the

views up and down stream are most attractive. Especially is this true from the floor of the highway bridge, beneath which the water is usually enlivened by canal boats passing with lumbering deliberation, while the sweep of the bounding hills, dotted with suburban homes, is broken into vistas by the foliage of the tree clusters on the low lands.

It seems a pity that a place so storied and so attractive as Chelles should have to be connected in American minds with Prison Farm 2, an institution which has left probably the most sinister memory of any connected with the American Expeditionary Forces, unless a possible exception be made of "The Bastille," at 10 Rue Ste. Anne, in Paris. The two places were, in fact, closely connected in operation. The American soldier offenders, most of them "A.W.O.L.'s" in Paris, were first gathered in at "The Bastille" and later put in confinement at Prison Farm 2, where they were subjected to the outrageous brutalities of the commanding officer, First Lieutenant Frank H ("Hardboiled") Smith, and his subordinates, Second Lieutenants Charles Mason and Warren Helphenstein, and Sergeant Clarence E. Ball. Some comfort, however, is to be derived from the thought that, having been proved guilty of practicing upon prisoners under their charge, cruelties utterly unwarranted by military law, these men all eventually received punishment in the United States.

On the high hills west of Gournay, Noisy-le-Grand holds a lofty seat far above valley-built Neuilly and just beyond the latter town, in a deep southward bend, the Marne begins its last series of meanders and, at the same time, leaves the Department of Seine-et-Oise and enters that of the Seine. The latter, which is virtually the metropolitan district of Paris, embracing nothing save the city and its immediate

suburbs, is at once the smallest department of France in area, 185 square miles, and much the greatest in population, having nearly 4,000,000 inhabitants.

Henceforth the Marne, shy recluse of arboreous valleys and bosky meadows, is a city dweller — but a dweller in what a city! Paris has expended upon her boulevards, parks, and suburban recreation places more intelligence and art and perhaps more superficial space, than any other city in the world. So seductive has she made the pathway for her lovely rustic guest, the Marne, that the river, seemingly covered with dismay as she approaches the city and bent upon plunging straight into the Seine, quickly overcomes her bashfulness and lingers, instead, in many loitering curves, as if to enjoy as long as possible the pleasant playgrounds wherein, beloved and caressed by the nature-loving Parisians, young and old, she surrenders wholly to their pleasure the charms which have adorned her since far-off Langres and Chaumont and St. Dizier.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PLAYMATE OF PARIS

ALREADY the double-decked tramcars from the Porte de Vincennes are at the river shore in widespread, hilly, and very modern Perreux and they go roaring across the bridge into the little square of more venerable and sedate Bry-sur-Marne, a place at the very gates of Paris which preserves in its name a trace of that rich and storied Brie region which we for so long have traversed.

An old Mairie, a square-towered church, an esplanade of densely foliaged trees leading off up a slope, and a rambling hotel with an open-air café where tables stand beneath trees and arbors of grapevines; these things look from the square of Bry upon the bridge and the surface of the river, where, on holidays, canoes and rowboats dart hither and thither over the trembling water. And out in the sunny open before the Mairie a bronze bust is borne up on a modest pedestal whose legend tells that it was erected to the memory of Louis Jacques Daguerre, the inventor of the daguerreotype, who lived in Bry and died there in 1851.

The town is, in fact, almost as well supplied with reminders of the father of the modern art of photography as is Meaux with those of Bossuet. Daguerre was almost as great an artist as he was an inventor, being particularly gifted in the portrayal of light and shade and it was as an artist that he developed the diorama, whose realistic effects are obtained by the manipulation of lights and shadows thrown upon the canvas. Indeed, for a long time Daguerre was more celebrated as the inventor of the diorama than of the daguerreotype until the development of photography showed what a

boundless field of possibilities he had opened with the latter invention. The small parish church of Bry contains a remarkable example of Daguerre's peculiar art. Filling the entire vault behind the altar is a painting, lighted from above, of a vast Gothic cathedral choir, so skillfully executed that the observer experiences the sensation of actually looking into that spacious interior, to which the actual church seems but an antechamber.

A short, winding street extends from the church past the Bellan Orphan Asylum and up the abrupt hill, beyond whose crest lies Villiers-sur-Marne. On the wall of a plain stone building just at the base of the hill are fixed two tablets, so high above the pavement that they might easily be passed unnoticed. The upper one states that this property was owned by Louis Daguerre and that he died in this house, July 10, 1851. The lower tablet is larger and its inscription, in this quiet street, with the sunlight filtering through the branches bending over the wall across the way, and the sparrows twittering in the dusty road, brings to the reader, with the shock almost of a sudden bugle blast, a realization of what transpired here, what was transpiring all around Paris, in the terrible battle autumn of 1870. The legend, in French, reads:

> By this road, on the thirtieth of November, 1870, bravely ascended the soldiers of the Fourth Regiment of Zouaves, under the bullets and the shells of the Germans. They gained the top, driving back the enemy until they reached the moat of the Park of Villiers, filled with water, where they were brought to a halt in a bloody combat. Here 6 officers and 170 enlisted men were killed and 380 severely wounded. Colonel Fournes, who led them, had two horses shot under him. — To their memories!

It is an echo of the first great sortie of the French armies defending Paris against the besiegers, on November 30, 1870. Extending along the entire southeastern side of the city, the

attack, driven home by no less than 100,000 troops, at first gave fair promise of success, but it was finally repulsed and the besieging lines of the Germans were drawn about Paris more closely than ever.

As one ascends the narrow street and, coming out on the upland, walks by winding paths northward between the tiny plots of truck gardeners, it is difficult to realize that such scenes have ever been enacted in this quiet land. Here, by the path, a double row of grapevines on a bit of slope, faces the sunny south; there, a square of cabbages or potatoes or some carefully trellised peas occupy a patch of level ground, around which the red clover blossoms and soft grass overbend the field path. Yonder is a little orchard, crimson apples bending the branches low, and between them, toward evening, one looks down long slopes of billowing treetops to the blue mist rising from the bosom of the Marne and the white homes of Neuilly glimmering duskily beyond. It is peace, not war, that the whole land radiates; peace that the Marne, for all its martial traditions, loves and clings to and lives for, here near its ending under the walls of Paris, as well as yonder in the bosky dell below the Cave of Sabinus.

Nor is there, of a long summer evening, any more cozy place for dinner among the dozens of cafés that border the Marne from Gournay to Charenton, than beneath the arbors and spreading trees of the hotel-restaurant at the end of the Bry bridge. Here the soft air drifts in from the breast of the river, cool after the heat of the day, and the indistinct sounds of passing water craft mingle with the low voices of those who dine at adjacent tables and sometimes with the strains of the small orchestra somewhere back on a balcony. A few hundred yards upstream is a passerelle across the river, from which, on moonlit nights, the home lights on the hills

and those of the barges resting quietly at their moorings under the land, cast long, wavering reflections in the water until the thin mist, suffused by them, seems, all dreamlike, to blend earth with the starry vault above. Ah, Bry-sur-Marne, with the dusk falling and the quiet sights and sounds of evening breathed upon by the soft airs of romance, how quietly, how drowsily it lies by the waters, as if harking for the vesper chimes from the unseen belfries of Paris, a child of country lanes stolen in to peer wonderingly at the hives of men!

The dew has gathered in the flowers
Like tears from some unconscious deep,
The swallows whirl around the towers,
The light runs out beyond the long cloud bars,
And leaves the single stars;
'Tis time for sleep, sleep, sleep,
'Tis time for sleep.

Around the turning of the river below Bry is another spot, dreamlike, also, and still lovely, but deriving its subtle charm from the perfume of olden days. It is the Ile-de-Beauté, still softly verdant and vibrant with bird songs as in the far-off days when Agnes Sorel, "the lady of beauty," dwelt there in the château built for her by King Charles VII. It stood, so tradition avers, in the midst of a park where swans, deer, peacocks, and other birds and animals roved at will over the lawns and among the little lakes, the fountains and the vines and woodlands beloved of the gentle and patriotic lady whose noble character was undefiled by a mode of life which the thought of her day scarcely frowned upon. Here she lived and wrought many deeds for the good of France which furthered the work begun earlier in the reign of Charles by his devoted maiden champion, Jeanne d'Arc.

Nogent, high on the hills and backed by another fort, is

just beyond the Ile de Beauté and between the two passes that high viaduct of the Chemin de Fer de l'Est, coming down from the busy railroad yards of Noisy-le-Sec and proceeding toward Troyes and Chaumont and Belfort, from which many an American doughboy, looking downward out of the open door of a *40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux,* caught his first glimpse of the Marne as he was trundled slowly eastward from Le Havre or Brest to one of the training areas. Nogent, with its numerous country houses climbing up the parklike hillsides toward the Bois de Vincennes, overlooks other islands in the river; l'Ile-Fanac, l'Ile-Loupe, and the long, parked island of Polangis, haunted by canoeists, while its view stretches onward across the vale of Joinville-le-Pont, encompassed by a U-shaped bend, and up to the hill crest beyond, crowned by the clustered dwellings of Champigny.

Antoine Watteau, sickly, nervous, but palpitating with energy and the fire of genius, gave to Nogent a name in art. There he did some of his best work and enjoyed the comradeship of his charming friend, Mme de Julienne, the inspirer, it is said, of his most celebrated painting, "The Embarkation for the Isle of Venus." Here, also, in the house of M. Lefebvre, the gentle artist passed away on July 18, 1721, making, the story goes, a tribute to his beloved art in his very last words, when he exclaimed to the priest who held a common crucifix before his eyes. "Take away that image! How was any artist able to conceive so badly the features of the Saviour?"

It seems a singularly happy coincidence that, as at Chaumont and Langres, both close to the source of the Marne, were established two of the first and most vital centers of American activity in France — General Headquarters and the Army Schools — so there should have been enacted at

The Marne, deeply green, near Nogent

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The river road—Nogent

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Joinville-le-Pont, almost at the end of the river, the last important act of the United States in the drama of the World War. In that act America, about to withdraw her armed hosts entirely from Europe, gracefully took the part of host to her Allies in the great military Olympic, as large and almost as representative as the Olympic Games themselves, which, under the name of the Inter-Allied Games, celebrated the common victory by a series of friendly athletic contests.

The games were held from June 22 to July 6, 1919, in Pershing Stadium, an athletic field nine acres in extent surrounded on its northern, eastern, and southern sides by concrete bleachers, or Tribunes Populaire, having a seating capacity of 22,500 spectators, and on its western side by the covered concrete grandstand, or Tribune d'Honneur, seating 2,500 persons. This truly imposing structure was built by the Young Men's Christian Association at a cost of 600,000 francs. On the opening day of the games, amid impressive ceremonies and before a crowd so huge that thousands had to be turned away, the stadium was presented by Mr. E. C. Carter, Chief Secretary of the A. E. F.-Y. M. C. A., on behalf of his organization to General Pershing, representing the American Expeditionary Forces, who, in turn presented it to M. Georges Leygues, French Minister of Marine, representing Premier Clemenceau, as a gift from the American Army to the French people, to perpetuate forever its memory among them.

It was the privilege of the present writer to be given the duty, during the summer of 1919, of editing, for the Athletic Section, General Staff, of the American Expeditionary Forces, the *History of the Inter-Allied Games,* which was written by various officers connected with the games and published by the Y. M. C. A. A few extracts from this vol-

ume will outline the interesting facts concerning the games perhaps better than they could be told in other words.

Arising out of the epochal circumstances of the greatest war of history, the Inter-Allied Games stand out as an event unique in the annals of modern sport. Never before in recent times has there been a gathering of athletic stars with a setting so unusual, and it is safe to assume that the occasion will not be duplicated within the memory of the participants. . . . . Its only parallel might be found in the classic games of the Homeric age when the armies of Agamemnon, "intrenched" before the walls of Troy, amused themselves with games and sports not unlike the competitions at Pershing Stadium.

That an athletic tournament of any sort could have been held after fifty-two months of devastating war, with the Allied countries impoverished by heavy losses, exhausted by long-sustained effort, weary after a seemingly interminable period of fighting, was in itself a remarkable exhibition of the sportsmanlike spirit which had distinguished the peoples leagued against the Central Powers. Inspired by love of the game, a desire to recognize the share that athletics played in making possible the victory, and the wish to continue and strengthen the ties of comradeship developed on the battle field, the countries which had suffered most from the war's desolation entered the tournament with the same whole-hearted enthusiasm as nations emerging from the conflict in a less exhausted condition.

The meet was "military" only to the extent that every participant had been an officer or enlisted man in one of the Allied armies. The question of eligibility was answered by an affirmative reply to the interrogation, "Were you a soldier in the Great War?" . . . .

The invitation to participate in the Inter-Allied Games was issued by General Pershing, as Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, on the ninth of January, 1919, less than five and a half months before the opening of the events themselves. . . . . Twenty-nine nations, colonies or dependencies were invited to participate and, in the end, nearly 1,500 athletes, representing eighteen nations or dominions, took part. The list of entrant countries differed, of course, materially from that of any Olympiad, as only those nations linked together in the common cause of justice in the war were eligible to compete. . . . .

In view of the fact that admission was entirely free to all the competitions, the actual attendance at the games could not be accurately checked. Only estimates could be made, but a daily average of 20,000 at Pershing Stadium was easily maintained for the fifteen days from opening to closing. Between 300,000 and 320,000 saw the competitions at the stadium. As there were several other places where events were staged it is perhaps a very conservative estimate to say that the Inter-Allied Games played to a gallery of half-a-million persons. . . . .

The concluding ceremony of the games took place on Sunday, July 6, when the medals were presented to the victors by General Pershing, the Allied flags lowered and the French standard left to float alone over Stade Pershing—now the official property of the French nation — an abiding monument to the most unique sport carnival in athletic history.

The lovely Park of Vincennes and the countryside and suburban villages lying on both banks of the Marne near it, were described by the author in a chapter in "The Inter-Allied Games" entitled "The Site and Construction of Pershing Stadium," in which he said:

For the permanent use to which it will be put in coming years — the practice of athletic sports among the French people — the site of Pershing Stadium was happily chosen. Situated within the eastern edge of the Bois de Vincennes, on the ancient highway between Vincennes and Joinville-le-Pont, it lies in the midst of what is not only one of the most beautiful of the many lovely parks of Paris, but in the one which is frequented, perhaps more than any other, by the average classes of the city, who, in Paris as elsewhere, make up the body and blood of its population. Of the Bois de Vincennes an Englishman wrote, a few years ago: "On Sunday afternoons in summer the Bois is crowded. Under every tree, along the edge of every lawn, by the bank of every stream, are family picnic parties, easily satisfied and intensely happy. Stolid Englishmen are astonished at the eagerness with which grown-up people are playing at ball or battledore. Nowhere is the light-hearted, kindly, cheery character of the French middle classes seen to greater advantage."

It is precisely to these classes that a great stadium for the practice of athletic sports will be most valuable because from them must come the chief strength of generations able to repair the cruel ravages of war in the French nation. No parting gift that Amer-

ica could have made to her ally would have better attested her deep desire for the speedy rehabilitation of France, or have offered greater possibilities for aiding to that end, than the stadium which was named in honor of the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces.

Lying just without the southeastern walls of Paris, whose nearest gateway, the Porte de Vincennes, is distant less than four kilometers, the stadium has around it a region rich in reminiscences of the eventful history of Paris and of France. In nearly every direction, but particularly toward the southeast along the lofty hills which follow the picturesque windings of the Marne, are a number of fine old châteaux, each with its sheaf of legends from the past. But the Bois de Vincennes itself is the appropriate center of such a region. The Bois, whose dense treetops, forming a pleasant background of green, look over the walls of the stadium on every side save that occupied by the Tribune of Honor, was, as a fragment of primeval forest, a hunting preserve of King Louis IX (St. Louis) in the thirteenth century, and the weathered obelisk which stands near the south corner of the École de Polytechnic, beside the main road from the Porte de Vincennes to the stadium, is a memorial erected on the spot where, it is said, formerly grew a great oak tree beneath which the good king was accustomed to dispense justice to his subjects. The original forest was replanted in 1731 by Louis XV and under Napoleon III was converted into a public park which at present contains about 2,275 acres, a great part of this area being given over to the Champs de Manoeuvers in the center and to the race course of Vincennes immediately southwest of the Pershing Stadium. This race course is the oldest and largest of the several around Paris.

Immediately north of the Bois is the suburb of Vincennes which originally grew up about the Château of Vincennes, a royal residence founded in the twelfth century and used and enlarged by the royalty of France until 1740. In this château died several kings of France and other famous personages, including Henry V of England, while in the great Donjon, 170 feet high, which is the last one remaining of nine towers, a long list of notable prisoners have been confind at one time or another. The château was defended for Napoleon against the Allies in 1814-15 by General Daumesnil, whose memory is perpetuated by a statue in the town and by the largest of the lakes in the Bois de Vincennes. Converted into a powerful fort and artillery depot by Louis Philippe in 1832-34,

the ancient stronghold still retains the latter function. The large Champ de Manoeuvres and the Polygone de l'Artillerie, as well as the École de Pyrotechnic and the Camp de St. Maur, occupying the whole central part of the Bois, are all in a sense military dependencies of Fort de Vincennes, as the work on the site of the old royal château is now called. It is, indeed, what might be termed the citadel of the powerful system of detached fortifications guarding Paris on the southeast from the crossings of the Marne River as it approaches its junction with the Seine at Charenton. North and south of Fort de Vincennes are several of the bastioned masonry forts which guarded the city during the siege of 1870-71, while east of it, on the hills beyond the Marne, lie Fort de Villiers and Fort de Champigny, works considered modern until 1914, and designed to protect the bridgehead of Joinville-le-Pont. On the nearer side of the river, entirely covering the loop of its last sweeping bend before it enters the Seine, stand the older, but once very powerful redoubts of Gravelle and Faisanderie, connected by a bastioned curtain separating the southeastern corner of the Bois de Vincennes from the town of St. Maur-les-Fosses, and commanding from their heights the whole populous suburban district embraced within the bend of the Marne.

The traditions of St. Maur-les-Fosses lead back to the most remote event recorded of this region, for it was here that in the year 287 A. D. the Roman emperor, Maximianus, attacked the Gallic peasants, the Bagaudae, who had revolted against the oppressions of Rome. The rebel leaders, Aelianus and Amandus, lost their lives and their forces were utterly crushed, Maximianus thus making good for a while longer the waning Roman power. East of St. Maur, on the hills rising along the opposite bank of the Marne, stands the village of Chennevières, from which the views toward Paris and over the surrounding country are so superb that Louis XIV seriously thought of making the place his royal residence and expending upon it the vast wealth and labor which he eventually lavished upon Versailles. It was at Chennevières that the long-distance and cross-country riding events of the horse-riding competitions were held.

About two kilometers east of Joinville-le-Pont, whose railroad station is the one most convenient to Pershing Stadium for suburban trains from Paris, lies, in the lap of the hills rising eastward, Champigny-sur-Marne. It is in the loop of the Marne forming the bridgehead of Joinville-le-Pont, previously mentioned. Here,

on the twenty-ninth of November, 1870, Paris being already in the throes of famine, large French forces under command of Generals Trochu and Ducret began the most formidable of the repeated sorties which, during the four months' course of the siege, were made at various points in the hope of breaking through the lines of the besieging Germans. Some ground was gained on that day and the next, but a bridge needed for the crossing of troops at Champigny was not thrown in time to be of use, while the French Army of the Loire, directed in dispatches sent by balloon to create a diversion in the German rear, failed to receive word in time to make the necessary attack. By most violent fighting the enemy was able to contain Trochu and Ducret in the bridgehead westward of Champigny and, after clinging for a while to the inferior positions which they had taken, the French retired on December 2 to the west bank of the Marne. Later and less powerful sorties elsewhere proving equally abortive, towards the end of January, 1871, Paris surrendered.

After the outbreak of war in 1914, the ground now occupied by the stadium was converted into a training area and its surface was covered with trenches and wire entanglements which had to be cleared away when the work of laying out an athletic field was begun in February, 1919.

The suburban places lying within the great loop of the Marne at St. Maur-les-Fosses are entirely of modern origin, but it is different with those on the left bank of the river. It has been mentioned above that there was severe fighting about Champigny in 1870. A monument behind the village marks a crypt wherein are interred the remains of both the French and the German soldiers who fell in the battle, the graves of the Germans being marked with the letter A, for "Allemands." South of Chennevières is the sixteenth-century Château of Ormesson, built in a lake and connected with the shore by two bridges.

In fact, all the pleasant hill country to the southeast of the bend is dotted with châteaux, many of which have reminiscences of famous personages or events of history, for it was natural that the country residences of powerful families

should have been built through the centuries in close proximity to the capital. About Sucy-Bonneuil are the château of Sucy, which belonged, in the sixteenth century, to Marshal Saxe, the distinguished general of Louis xv; Chaud-Moncel, once the property of the royalist Dames de Sainte-Amaranthe, who were passed beneath the guillotine because they were rumored to have plotted against the life of Robespierre; and the Château of Montaleau, where Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, later the Marchioness de Sévigné, lived as a child. The trenchant letter writer of the times of "the Grand Monarch," who, in her voluminous epistles to her daughter and her friends, has left to us probably the most intimate and vivid pictures of the life and the notable personages of that colorful epoch which have ever been penned, retained all through life fond recollections of Montaleau. Once, in later years, she wrote to her daughter: "I inform you that the other day I was at Sucy. I was delighted to see the house in which I passed my most happy childhood. I had no rheumatism in those days!"

One who has been voyaging for days or weeks through the reaches of the Marne Valley while it has unfolded before him its ever-changing vistas of rustic loveliness varied here and there by the presence of cities never so vast as to obtrude themselves brusquely upon the breadth of the countrysides all about them, is not apt to find his mind keyed for the sensations which grip him when, after ascending the curving road from Champigny, he comes to the old parish church of Chennevières and, crossing the brick-paved courtyard opposite to it, steps out upon the short terrace dizzily elevated above the treetops bordering the Marne. For there suddenly upon his eyes, grown accustomed to the wide peace of nature, there dawns across the myriad roofs of St. Maur, the vision of the

City — that wonder city which is the focal center of all that is exquisite in artistic and physical and mental emotion; the most exalting, the most sinister, the gayest and most deeply mystical, fascinating and soul-enthralling hive of humanity that the broad earth boasts in all its continents.

Through the pearly haze of the afternoon sunshine, there gleam the towers of Notre Dame, eternal prayer in chiseled stone of the passionate heart of Paris, lifting in majestic calm above the crowded streets where flow and ebb the arterial currents of her throbbing life; yonder the dimly seen entablature of the Arc de Triomphe vaunts the chivalric pride of a martial nation even as the columned, golden dome of the Hôtel des Invalides sumptuously entombs the glories of its past. At one extremity of the splendid panorama, like the pillar of cloud set by Jehovah before the face of Israel, rushes skyward the shaft of the Eiffel Tower, about whose pinnacle play the invisible lightnings that syllable men's thoughts across the seven seas, at the other, upon the heaving breast of sensuous Montmartre, the white and virgin wonder of Sacré Coeur's alabaster dome and minarets carry toward heaven the insatiable longings and aspirations and repentances and frenzies and hopes of this Babylon, this Rome, this Jerusalem, that drinks and drinks perpetually of the waters of life and is still perpetually athirst. Upon the terrace of Chennevières, gazing into the blue west, well might the gods of high Olympus stand and wonder and tremble, for there the close-knit fibers of the composite soul of all humanity would lie, stripped and palpitating, before their eyes.

Bonneuil, Créteil, and Maison-Alfort, stretched along main roads leading to Charenton, look down from hill crests upon the Marne and across it to the glades of the Bois de Vincennes, the back of the grand-stand at Vincennes race

First glimpse of the Seine bridges and distant Paris

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The Marne on the outskirts of Paris

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course, and the grassy walls of the Gravelle Redoubt. In this old-fashioned masonry defense work, with its high ramparts and superannuated barbette guns of the seventies, the writer found, in the summer of 1919, a group of the huge search-light projectors and a numerous battery of the antiaircraft guns which were used during the war to throw up a part of the search-light illumination and the barrage against night-bombing German Gothas, which encircled Paris in a wall of fire and piercing light on such occasions, and heard from the lips of the poilus of the guard still stationed there, some stirring tales of those nights of terror.

Behind the redoubt, on a space of open ground beyond which loom the buildings of the race course, was a more curious reminiscence of the war. Here, in long rows with narrow aisles between them, lay rotting on the ground the bodies, minus engines and chassis, of hundreds of motor vehicles of every description. Here, waving in the wind, was the tattered velour of an elegant limousine; there, the remains of a taxicab; yonder, the big top of a truck, the lettering of some Paris mercantile establishment visible through the fading coat of blue-gray paint which had been splashed over it, as it had been over all the others. These were the remains of the civilian motor cars commandeered by the army in the early days of the war, before service *camions* could be built in sufficient numbers to meet the sudden and enormous demand of the armies in the field. Though perhaps none of these decaying relics of happier days actually participated in the movement, one seemed justified in thinking, as he looked at them, of the long train of Paris taxicabs moving in shadowy file along the hills northwest of Meaux on the night of September 7, 1914, bringing up the troops to extend Maunoury's left and attempt the turning of von Klück's flank. In

the quiet shades of the Bois they rest from the labors which were theirs until they were worn and wracked to uselessness —expended—as rest the bones of most of the heroes who drove them, on the battle fields of the Western Front.

And now, past the busy warehouses and humble water-front homes of Alfort on the south bank and Charenton on the north, past stretches of shady avenue and riverside promenades where a few pedestrians loiter, leaning over the walls and idly watching the barges floating by, past the enormous Charenton Hospital and Lunatic Asylum which has grown into the "bedlam of France" from the tiny hospital of twelve beds founded here in 1642 by Sebastian Leblanc, the Marne goes hurrying to embrace with its eager waters the sister waters of the Seine. Freighted with the barges and tugs of a busy commerce, but still sparkling, still gentle, still creeping modestly by stone-revetted quays and smoking factory chimneys, and beneath the booms of overhanging electric cranes, its current sweeps out to mingle with that of the greater stream, as if rejoicing in the union. So, together they go dancing away through the walls of Paris to pass the splendid bridges, the palaces, and domes of the Ile de la Cité and the Quais and the cool depths of the Bois de Boulogne, and thence to swing down the long remaining stretch to Le Havre and the waiting sea. Our journey with the Marne is finished.

A few steps off the Boulevard St. Germain, in the older section of that half of Paris which lies south of the Seine, there stands beside the narrow and somewhat dingy Rue de Grenelle a beautiful monumental structure in the form of a crescent, nearly 100 feet in length and 38 feet high. It is called the Fountain of Grenelle and it was erected in 1738 from designs by Edme Bouchardon, native of Chaumont and

sculptor to the Popes and to Louis xv. Over the portico which shelters the fountain, so elevated above the street that few passers-by even notice it, rises a noble group of statuary, probably the finest ever wrought by the chisel of the master.

Enthroned on a pedestal in the center of the group is the robed figure of the city of Paris. On either hand she is guarded by reclining figures, each couched among long sedge grasses wherein aquatic fowl are half revealed, and each holding an urn gushing with waters. The figure on the right is that of a virile, bearded man, a Triton — the Seine. On the left is the graceful, rounded form of a beautiful woman, a naiad — the Marne. So supple and flowing are the outlines of the figure of the goddess that the observer cannot resist the feeling that beneath the cold marble is someway, as it also seems in the Venus de Milo, the softness and vitality of the flesh. It is easy to conjecture that Bouchardon, striving to wrest from the stone his symbolic ideal of the river which he had known and loved since he had wandered by its shores, a boy, was inspired by the warmth of a very personal affection to a mastery of interpretation more perfect than he was able to attain in any other of his many subjects.

Thus it is with the Marne. To those who know her intimately, she is a person; a captivating naiad, endowed with the character and many complex moods of a lovable woman — fretful at times, sometimes perverse, and again furious with the anger of outraged virtue, as she was along the battle fronts of invasion, but often, oh, much more often, shy, quiet, gently merry; loving with true and constant affection to those who love her. Such was the Marne of the past and such is she today; heroine, patriot, seer, and divinity; eternally old, eternally young, and wearing all her laurels with the modesty of an unspoiled child.

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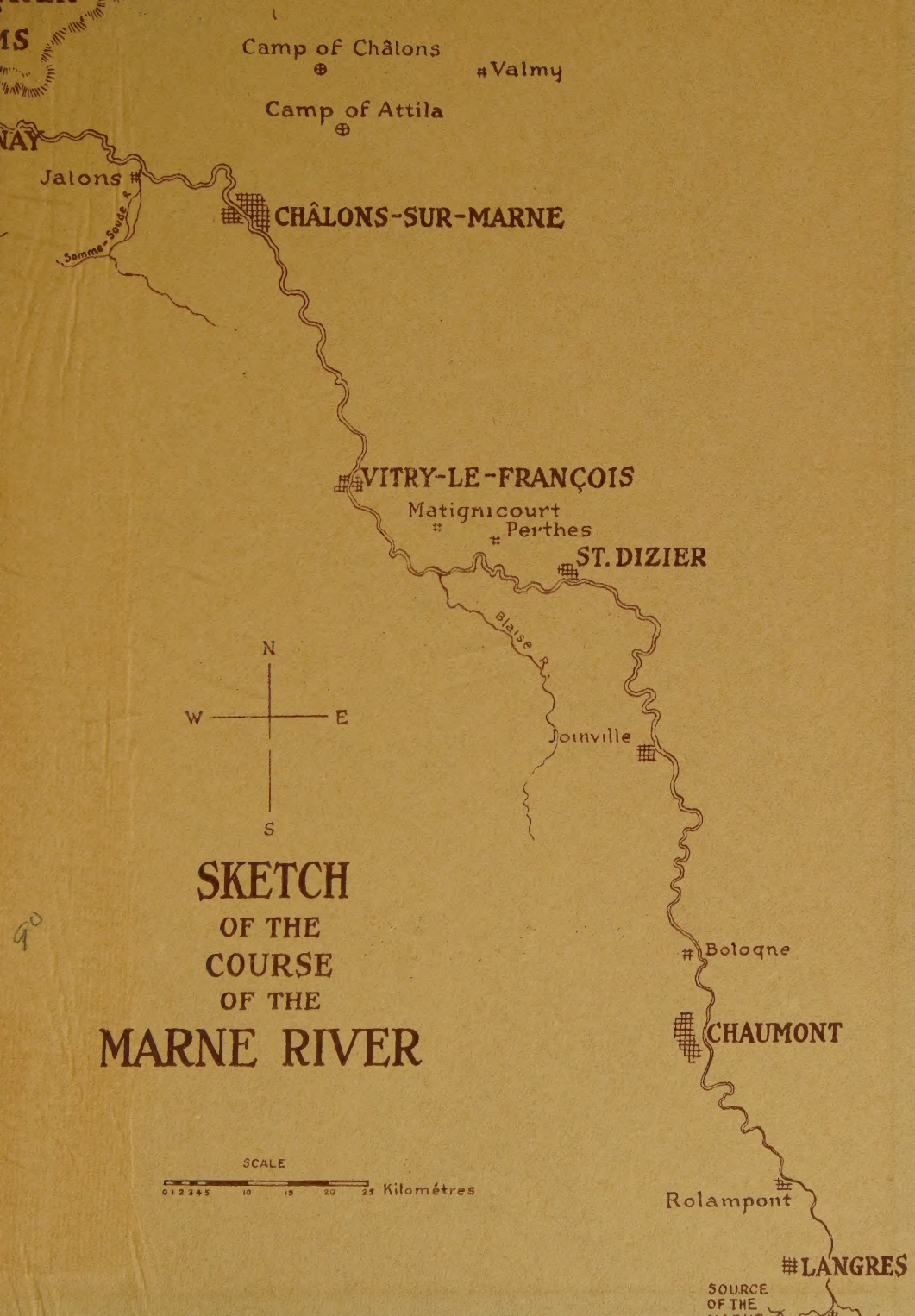
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